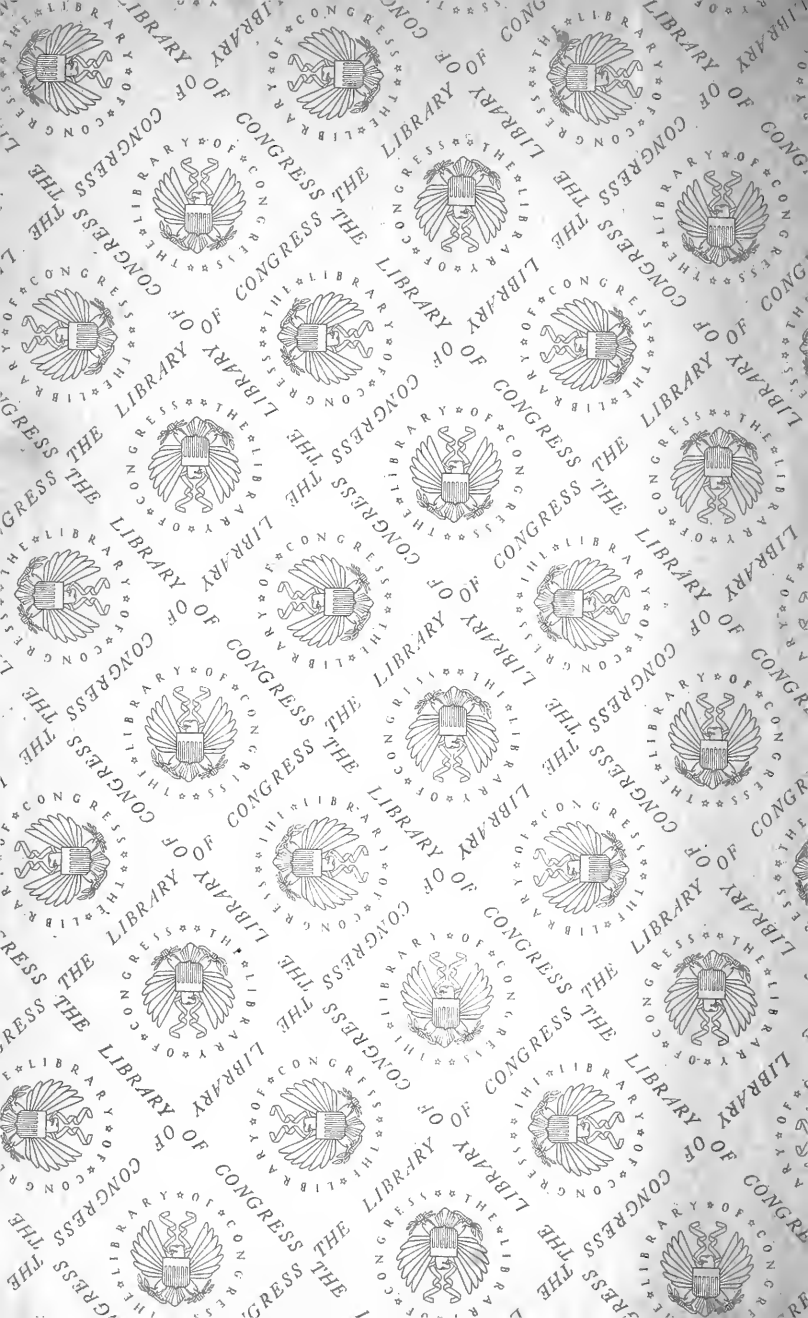
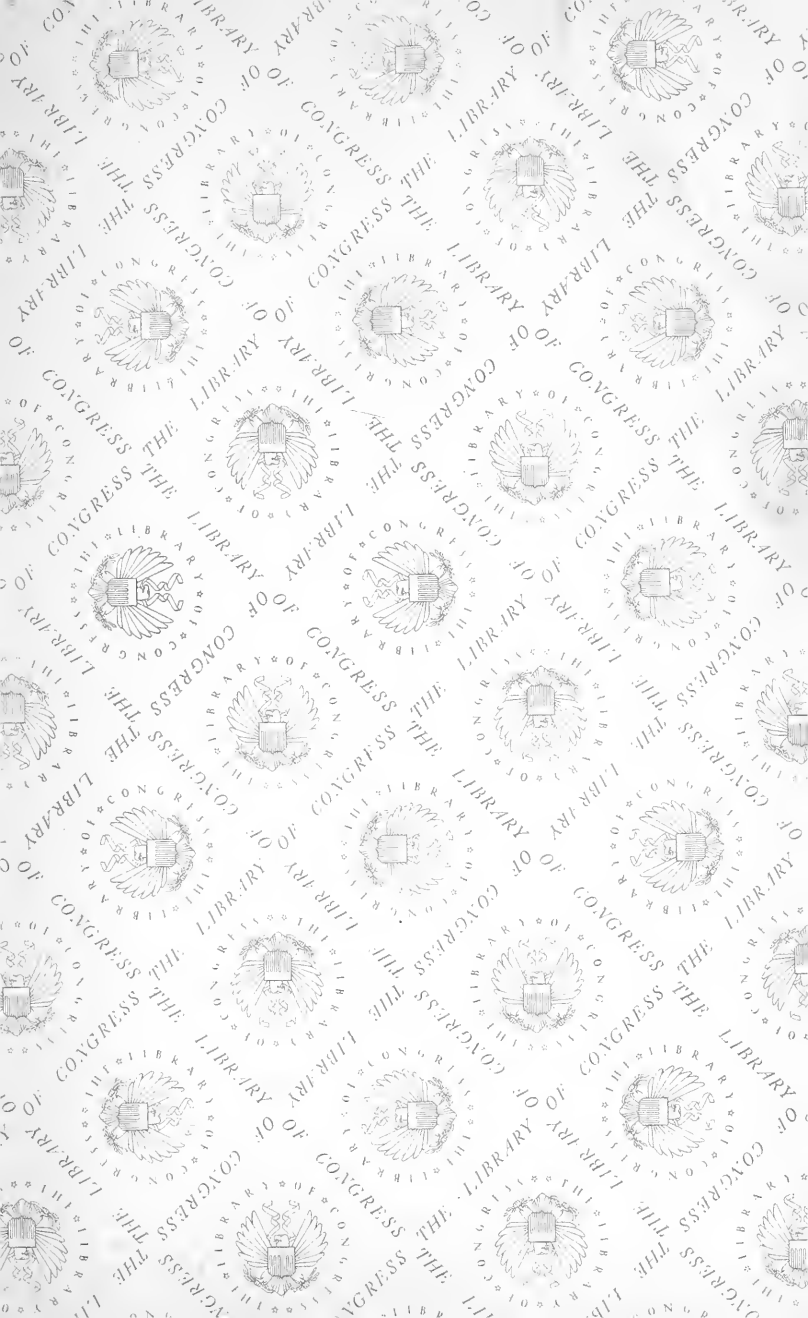


SHAKESPEARE

HAMLET

MURCELL AND SONERS





Shakespeare, William
H A M L E T

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES,
AND QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

*Adapted from Marshall and Wood's
"Oxford and Cambridge Edition"*

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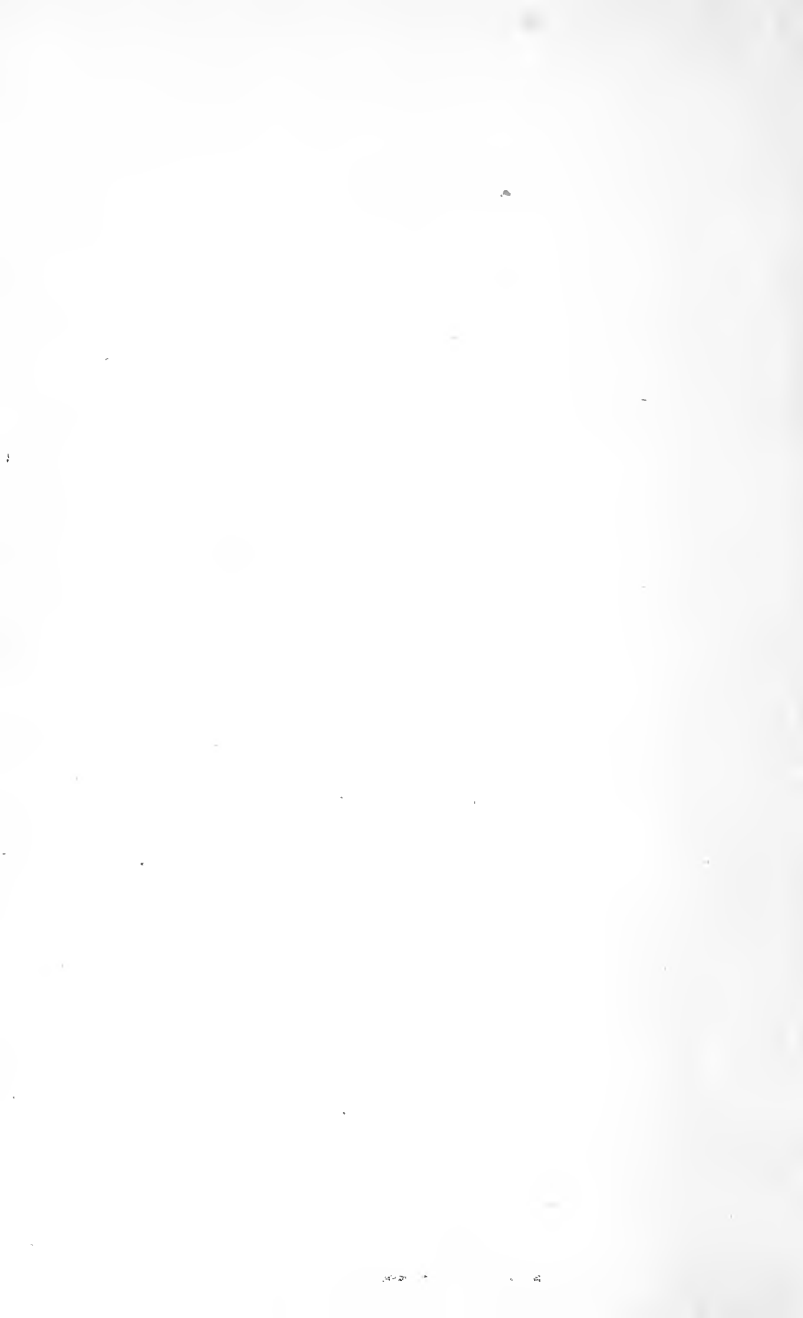
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PREFACE

This series of Shakespeare's plays, which includes *The Merchant of Venice*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*, is based mainly on the Oxford and Cambridge editions of Spilsbury, and Marshall and Wood. The present Editors have found it expedient to eliminate certain passages in the text, as well as to make some changes of matter and form in the editorial work, deemed necessary for American schools. The Introduction contains a Biographical Sketch of Shakespeare, a short account of the History of the Drama, brief references to the Sources of the Play, to the Characters, to Versification, to the Grammar of Shakespeare, etc. The annotated words are printed in italic type and the notes and word equivalents are given in the margin in juxtaposition with the text for the convenience of the student. The Glossary and many of the Notes have been rewritten, condensed, or amplified, as the case required, and the Classical and Biblical Allusions have been included in the Notes and Glossary. An abstract of the play has been supplied in *Hamlet* and in *The Merchant of Venice*. Some unimportant and apocryphal matter has been omitted. The section on Shakespearean Grammar will be found convenient for those who may have difficulty in classifying many Shakespearean expressions, and the Questions for Review will be of advantage to both teacher and pupil, by saving time for the one, and by assigning specific work to the other.



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INTRODUCTION

I. NARRATIVE OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE

William Shakespeare, the greatest of English dramatic poets, was born at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, England, on April 23, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was of the yeoman class. He had been a successful Warwickshire farmer, but he adopted the trade of glover on his removal to Stratford in 1553. There he soon became an important factor in municipal affairs, and by ability and industry he rapidly rose from one position of trust to another, until finally, in 1568, he became high bailiff or mayor of the town. Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, was of an old Warwickshire family, and though she inherited "lands and houses" she had no education.

John and Mary Shakespeare had eight children—four sons and four daughters. William, the third child, was the eldest son. Of his infancy and boyhood we know practically nothing. It is probable, however, that at the age of seven he entered the grammar school of Stratford, where he learned the rudiments of Latin, English grammar, writing, arithmetic, and probably a little Greek. His years at school were not many, for the declining fortunes of his father compelled the boy to seek employment when he was but thirteen years of age. After this we hear little or nothing about him until the time of his marriage, which probably took place in December, 1582. His wife, Ann Hathaway, of whom the boy-poet admiringly wrote

Ann Hathaway, she hath a way
To charm all hearts, Ann Hathaway,

does not seem to have long exerted that charm over her young husband. At the time of their union he was little more than

eighteen, while she had attained the more mature age of twenty-six. This marriage, like most marriages of its kind, did not prove a happy one.

If a small amount of reliable tradition can be winnowed from the chaff of fiction with which the memory of Shakespeare's boyhood days at Stratford is surrounded, we may give credence to the tales regarding his youthful follies and escapades. Of the latter but one may be mentioned as having a direct bearing upon his whole career. We are told that he took part in poaching expeditions—a prohibited practice of the time—during one of which he was caught stealing deer from the estate of the eccentric Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote. The punishment for this offense in those days was a fine and imprisonment. Sir Thomas, being Justice of the Peace for that district, acted as “judge, jury, and executioner” in the case of the young Shakespeare, who bitterly resented the punishment meted out to him. In revenge, it is said, he wrote the scurrilous lampoon beginning

A parliament member, a justice of peace,
At home a poor scarecrow, etc.

and posted it on the gate to Charlecote Manor.

This naturally aroused Sir Thomas to further reprisals, and Shakespeare, to escape his vengeance, fled to London in 1585. Verification of the poaching tradition may be found in *2 Henry IV* and in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, where Lucy is caricatured as “Justice Shallow.” The three lucas or pikes, in the Lucy coat-of-arms, apparently suggested the “dozen white lucas” in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the many allusions to poaching found in the context are none the less significant.

Before the poet's departure for London, three children were born to him—Susanna, the eldest, in May, 1583, and Hamnet and Judith, twins, in February, 1585. On his flight, the immediate support of these children is supposed to have devolved upon his

mother-in-law, Mrs. Hathaway, of Shottery, then a widow in affluent circumstances.

Tradition says that Shakespeare's first employment in London was holding horses at theater doors, and doing odd jobs for theater-goers. Be this as it may, we soon find him employed as prompter's attendant, whose duty it was to notify the actors when it was their turn to appear upon the stage, etc., and later we find him filling minor parts in the plays. Gradually he worked his way into more important positions. During these first few years, he must have devoted considerable time to reading, as a preparation for the wonderful works he was afterwards to produce. He recast and revised many old plays, began the production of original dramas, and acted some of the leading rôles in his own plays. In company with William Kempe and Richard Burbage he made a successful appearance before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace in 1594. He acted before her again at Whitehall in 1596, at Richmond and Whitehall in 1600, four times at Whitehall in 1601-02, and at Richmond Palace in 1603, a month before her death. In 1603 he fell under the favorable notice of King James I., who granted him and his company a license to play in London and the surrounding provinces. Later he appeared at court on several occasions, and in 1604 he marched in the royal train when James made his formal passage from the tower to Westminster. On this occasion he and each of his companions received four and one-half yards of scarlet silk, the usual dress allowance of court actors in those days. It is quite evident that as an actor Shakespeare was much more successful, financially, than as a playwright.

- Whatever may have been Shakespeare's youthful follies and extravagances, in later life he became not only a great poet, but he also developed the instincts of a shrewd business man. Through his acting and the sale of his plays he accumulated a respectable fortune, with part of which he purchased some

valuable property in London and elsewhere. After an absence of eleven years he returned to Stratford in 1596, to bury his only son, Hamnet.*

At Stratford Shakespeare invested considerable money in houses and lands, and obtained from the government the distinction of a coat-of-arms, but he did not take up his residence there until 1616. In this year he abandoned dramatic composition and began to enjoy, in his beautiful home at Stratford, a well deserved and much needed rest. At the beginning of this year, however, his health began to fail rapidly, and by April his end was near. The actual cause of his death is unknown, but it is generally admitted that overwork, and a not too submissive obedience to the laws of health, hastened an all too early dissolution. He died on the fifty-second anniversary of his birth, April 23, 1616, and was buried inside the chancel of Stratford church. On his tomb was inscribed the following epitaph:

Good frend for Jesus' sake forbear
To digg the dust encloased heare,
Blese be ye man yt spares thes stones,
And curst be he yt moves my bones.

II. SHAKESPEARE'S RELIGION

The question of Shakespeare's religion has been long, and sometimes furiously, debated. Many eminent writers incline to the belief that he was a Roman Catholic, while many others, equally eminent, maintain that he was a Protestant. At the risk of being considered partisan the editors have decided to insert the following rather lengthy extract from the pen of the distinguished *litterateur* and scientist, James J. Walsh, M.D., L.H.D.

* The direct line of Shakespeare's family became extinct a little over fifty years after the poet's death. Judith married Thomas Quiney, of Stratford. The offspring of this marriage—three boys—died before reaching the age of manhood. Susanna married Dr. Hall, and of their union was born Elizabeth, the only granddaughter of the poet. Elizabeth married Thomas Nash, who died leaving no children. She then married John Barnard, who was afterwards knighted by Charles II. Lady Barnard died childless in 1669, and thus the immediate family of Shakespeare became extinct.

This extract they hope will be instructive to many Catholics, and interesting, at least, to some who are not Catholics:

There is no doubt that Shakespeare's mother lived and died a Catholic. Her name was Mary Arden, and many of the Ardens continued to be staunch Catholics even during the dangers of Elizabeth's reign. Indeed, one of the prominent members of the family suffered death for the faith. Shakespeare's mother, moreover, made a will in which there is a mention of the Blessed Virgin, a custom that had gone out of vogue in England at this time except among Catholics. Shakespeare's father, too, is on the list of Stratford recusants who were summoned by the court for not attending the Anglican service on Sundays. Shakespeare's immediate surroundings, likewise, were distinctly Catholic, for the spirit of the old religion had not died as yet in England. Indeed, it was very much alive in the central portion of the country.

It is sometimes said, however, that there can be no question of Shakespeare's being a Catholic, for he was married, baptized, and buried in the Anglican Church. But these facts, it must be remembered, have in themselves no such significance as they would possess at the present time. There was no way of having the birth of a child properly registered then in England except by having it baptized in the church by law established. Obsequies also had to be observed according to the Anglican rite, for the only cemetery was close to the parish church. As for Shakespeare's marriage, in recent years the interesting suggestion has been made that the real reason for the circumstances attending the ceremony, which are supposed to carry a hint of scandal with them, is because he was originally married by a Catholic priest. As it was then very perilous for a priest to show himself in public or to perform any official church service, the marriage was, of course, performed secretly. Anne Hathaway's family, moreover, was Catholic by tradition, and about the time of the marriage it is known that a priest, not entirely without the knowledge of the local authorities, used to say Mass privately, in the loft of one of the houses at Shottery.

But if Shakespeare was a Catholic should not his plays show it? Unquestionably. And I maintain they do. Commentators have pointed out, for instance, that Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* follows Arthur Brooke's *Tragical History of Romeo and*

Juliet very closely. He has, however, changed the whole of the play's attitude toward the Catholic Church. Confession instead of being a source of sin actually protects the young people from their own passion in the most difficult circumstances, and almost succeeds in rescuing them from an unfortunate complication. Instead of being "superstitious," Friar Lawrence is pictured as a dear old man interested in his plants and what they can do for mankind, but interested still more in human souls, trying to care for them and quite willing to do everything that he can, even risking the displeasure of two noble houses rather than have the young people commit sin. Friar Lawrence is represented in general as one to whom Romeo and Juliet would naturally turn in their difficulty.

But *King John*, it is maintained, represents an altogether different attitude toward the Church. In that play they assert there are passages which make it very clear that Shakespeare shares the general feeling of the men of England in his time. *King John* protests, for example:

That no Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions.
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,
So under Him that great supremacy,
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,
Without the assistance of a mortal hand:
So tell the Pope, all reverence set apart
To him and his usurp'd authority.

In this play, too, there are some bitter comments on monks which would seem to prove that Shakespeare shared the opinions of many of his contemporaries regarding monasticism. But let us see: *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, from which Shakespeare made his play, was probably written in the year of the Spanish Armada when English national feeling ran very high and there was bitter antagonism against Catholicism as the religion of England's greatest enemies. The dramatist—we are not quite sure who it was—shrewdly took advantage of this political situation in order to gain favor for his play. He tickled the ears of the groundlings and attracted popular attention by stimulating the prejudice of his audience. Shakespeare modified all this to a very marked extent when he rewrote the play seven years later, though it can be seen that he used many of the words of the original version and was evidently following it very

closely. But for some good reason he was manifestly minimizing all the anti-Catholic bias in it though letting stand whatever sentiments were suitable for such characters as King John and his *entourage*. In the matter of monks and nuns and their treatment in the original version of *King John*, Shakespeare has been even more drastic in the changes that he made.

But the best evidence of Shakespeare's attitude toward the Anglican Church is to be found in *King Henry VIII.*, one of the poet's greatest plays and the last he wrote. Some of the Wolsey speeches in it are the finest examples of English that were ever penned. It is conceded by all the critics to be the ripest fruit of his mature years. Therefore, if a play can be considered the expression of Shakespeare's settled opinion, that play is *Henry VIII.* Now it so happens that the subject of *Henry VIII.* is exactly the story of how the change of religion came about in England. But it is sometimes urged that the fifth act, with its culmination in the birth of Elizabeth, and the high prospects for England and the rejoicings which this occasions, indicates that the writer considered that the marriage of King Henry to Anne Boleyn and the birth of a daughter by that union marked a great epoch in English history and, above all, that the steps that led to this happy termination, though dramatically blameworthy, must be condoned owing to their happy consequences. It is well known, however, that the fifth act by every test known to Shakespearean commentators was not written by Shakespeare at all, but by Fletcher.

Our knowledge of Shakespeare's relations with people in London would indicate that a great many of his friends and intimates were Catholics. It is possible that the Burbages, the actors with whom he was so closely joined during most of his dramatic career, belonged to the Warwickshire Catholic family of that name. One of Shakespeare's dearest friends, the Earl of Southampton, who was his patron in early years, and his supporter when he bought the Blackfriars theater, was closely allied to a Catholic family and, as Simpson has pointed out, was cradled in Catholic surroundings.

The conversion of Ben Jonson about the middle of the last decade of the sixteenth century showed how easily men might be Catholics in London at this time. Ben Jonson was in the Marshalsea prison on a charge of murder in 1594 and found

himself surrounded by priests who were charged with treason because of their refusal to take the oath of supremacy. By associating with them Jonson became a Catholic and when released from prison married a Catholic wife. His child was baptized Mary, and Shakespeare was chosen as her sponsor. This choice of a godfather seems to indicate that Shakespeare was a Catholic at this time for, in his ardor as a new convert, Ben Jonson would scarcely have selected an Anglican for that office.

One more proof of Shakespeare's Catholicism in conclusion: About the close of the seventeenth century Archdeacon Davies, who was a local historian and antiquarian in the neighboring county of Staffordshire, but who was well acquainted with Stratford and its history, and who could easily have had very definite sources of information denied to us, declared that Shakespeare "dyed a papist." It would have been perfectly possible, it must be remembered, for Archdeacon Davies to have spoken with people who knew Shakespeare during the years that the poet spent in Stratford at the end of his life. After this review of the evidence I can not but conclude that Shakespeare not only "dyed a papist," but also lived as one.

Leaving those, to whom these lines may be of interest, to make their own deductions, the editors accept the conclusions of the distinguished Jesuit, Herbert Thurston, who, in discussing this point in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, maintains that there is no real ground for the belief that Shakespeare either lived or died a Catholic. Thurston concludes his able study of this question by stating, "The point must remain forever uncertain."

III. SHAKESPEARE'S LEARNING

Of Shakespeare's learning it may be said that though classical quotations and allusions are numerous throughout his works, Ben Jonson credits him with "small Latin and less Greek." "His quotations from Latin literature are such as a schoolboy might make from Virgil, Ovid, and the other authors he had studied; and his allusions to classical history and mythology are mostly from the same sources, or from the familiar stock in English books of the period." (Rolfe.) In comparing Shake-

Shakespeare with the dramatists of his time, Jasper Mayne, writing in 1637, mentions him as one of those who did his work "without Latin helps"; and Mayne's contemporary, Ramsey, in complimenting Ben Jonson on his knowledge of the classical languages, says that he (Jonson)

could command

That which your Shakespeare could scarce understand.

Yet we are told that Shakespeare's work is "Art without art, unparalleled as yet," and though he borrowed nothing from Latin or Greek, his Julius Cæsar ravished the audience,

When some new day they would not brook a line

Of tedious (though well labour'd) Catiline,

and Jonson's "Sejanus too was irksome." In Fuller's *Worthies* we find the following reference to Shakespeare: "He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, Poeta non fit, sed nascitur—one is not made but born a poet. Indeed his learning was very little . . . nature itself was all the art which was used on him." And he speaks of the wit combats between him and Ben Johnson, "which two I behold like a Spanish great gal-
leon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning; solid but slow in his performances: Shakespeare, like the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk and lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention." Dryden in his *Essay on Dramatic Poesy* (1668), says: "Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards and found her there:" and in the same author's prologue to *Julius Cæsar* we find,

So in this Cæsar which today we see,

Tully ne'er spoke as he makes Antony.

Those then that tax his learning are to blame;

He knew the thing, but did not know the name.

Great Jonson did that ignorance adore,

And tho' he envied much, admired him more.

The material for his historical plays he obtained from Holinshed and Plutarch, and in the use of these rather unreliable authorities he makes many unscholarly mistakes.

During his mature years and in the time of his prosperity, he brought out his best works. Some writers credit him with the authorship of forty-three plays of a dramatic character. Seven of these are considered spurious. Thirty-three known to be his are divided as follows:

The Taming of the Shrew	}	Italian Origin	}	Comedies		
The Merchant of Venice						
All's Well that Ends Well						
Much Ado About Nothing						
Measure for Measure	}	Classical (from Plautus)				
The Comedy of Errors						
Twelfth Night						
Midsummer-Night's Dream						
As You Like It	}	Mediæval Sources				
Cymbeline						
Two Gentlemen of Verona					Legendary	
The Merry Wives of Windsor					Spanish Origin	
Love's Labor's Lost	English Origin					
	French Origin					
The Winter's Tale	}	Origin Unknown				
The Tempest						
Timon of Athens	}	Classical Origin (Plutarch's Lives, by North)	}	Tragedies		
Pericles						
Julius Cæsar						
Antony and Cleopatra						
Coriolanus						
Hamlet	}	Mediæval Origin				
Troilus and Cressida						
Romeo and Juliet	}	Italian Origin				
Othello						
King Lear	}	Origin—Legendary History of Britain				
Macbeth						
King John	}	Origin—Holinshed & Hall			}	Chronicle Plays
King Richard the Second						
1 and 2 King Henry the Fourth						
King Henry the Fifth						
1, 2, 3 King Henry the Sixth						
Richard the Third						
Henry the Eighth						

Besides these he wrote one hundred and fifty-four Sonnets and some Narrative Poems.

IV. THE DRAMA

A lengthy discussion of the drama cannot be conveniently introduced into a text of this kind; therefore, the chief heads only will be touched upon. Drama is a Greek term signifying action, and in its application it comprehends all forms of literature proper for presentation on the stage. In the drama, actors usually tell a story by means of word and action. This story may be tragic or comic;—tragic when the serious phases of life are discussed, comic when life's follies and foibles are depicted. Other phases of the drama which do not, strictly speaking, come under the heading tragedy or comedy, are the Greek Satyrs, the Morality Plays of the Middle Ages, the Pastoral Plays of the Renaissance, and the Melodramas still in vogue.

Although the drama was well established in the remote ages in India and China, the earliest examples of pure dramatic art are to be found in Greece. From the sacred songs and choruses in honor of the god Dionysus, the Greeks in time evolved a form of drama, the chief features of which, even in its highest stages of development, were lyric or choral. To Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, in the fifth century, and to Menander at a later period, the Greek drama owes its greatness and its influence in ancient and in modern dramatic literature.

The Roman drama, as it has come down to us in the works of Terence, Plautus, and Seneca, is but a slightly modified form of Menander, and shows some traces of the influence of Aeschylus and other dramatists of his time. This modification, in the comedies of Plautus at least, was not for the betterment of the drama; on the contrary, it was a concession to the depraved taste of his Roman audience. Unfortunately, Plautus' travesties of the old Greek masters later served as models for the dramatic writers of the Renaissance, and his influence is felt even to the

present day. Modern tragedy, generally speaking, is a direct offspring of the works of Seneca. Toward the close of the Roman Empire, the theaters became the scenes of the most degraded exhibitions of indecency and debauchery. Christianity attacked these indecencies and drove the mimes from their haunts of infamy into the streets and byways of Rome and its environs. These mimes practiced their mimicry in the villages and cross-roads, and became the models for the strolling players of the middle ages.

Christianity, however, recognized the necessity of the drama as a humanizing influence, and though years elapsed before its restoration as drama proper, the leaders of the new religion set about the substitution of wholesome Christian plays for the Roman indecencies to which they had recently given the death blow. The Scriptures and the liturgy of the church were rich stores from which were drawn the materials for the *Mystery*, the *Morality*, and the *Miracle Plays*. After a time these exhibitions passed from the control of churchmen into the hands of the Guilds. Under the management of the Guilds these plays soon lost their religious aspect, and before the end of the fifteenth century they had been completely divorced from church influence, and were ready to be destroyed or absorbed by the spirit of the New Learning. This destruction or absorption, however, was not accomplished without a struggle. The leaders of the Renaissance advocated the complete dominance of classic influence in the reconstruction of the drama, while the Mediævalists strenuously advocated the perpetuation of the *Mystery*, *Morality*, and *Miracle Plays*. Of this travail, however, was born the modern drama.

Italy, France, Germany, England, and Scandinavia contributed largely to the formation of the modern drama, but practically all the dramatic writers of these countries have been influenced by the Greek and Roman masters. These masters have been slavishly imitated by all but a few of their pupils. This

is especially true in the matter of composition and technique. The observance of the unities, the harmony of rhyme, the smoothness of rhythm, the maintenance of the chorus, the number and character of the *dramatis personæ*, etc., were classic restrictions, which, to a certain extent, have stultified the higher and broader aspirations of many a dramatic genius. Among those who rebelled against these restrictions, in so far as they affected the English drama, were some of the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare—Marlowe, Kyd, Green, and Lyly. These men opened the way for the sweeping innovations of Shakespeare, and for the half-hearted adoption of these innovations by Ben Jonson, who often apologized to his contemporaries for his temerity in disregarding the unities and other classic formulæ.

Since Shakespeare's time, or what is known as the period of the Elizabethan drama, no English dramatic literature, worthy of comparison with the work of that great master, has appeared. During the reign of James I., Massinger, Middleton, Shirley, and others wrote, but their art was only a weak imitation of their masters, Marlowe and Shakespeare. Addison, Steele, Goldsmith, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, and others, have sought recognition on the dramatic stage, but with little or no success. So far America has produced nothing of a dramatic nature worthy of recognition, and judging from the dominance of the light, frivolous, vaudeville performances on the English and American stages, the drama as a popular entertainment has been laid to rest, and the day of its resurrection seems far distant.

V. THE REPRESENTATION OF THE DRAMA IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME

The staging of the drama in Shakespeare's time was a very different matter from what it is today. The primitive theaters, or theatrical inns, were rude wooden structures, usually circular in form, with a covered stage and covered galleries, and an open

pit exposed to the vicissitudes of wind and weather. These crude structures were usually located outside the city walls, and beyond the jurisdiction of the city authorities, for, at that time, all theatrical representations were held in disfavor by the Puritanical leaders in church and state. The gallants of the town occupied the stage with the players, and delighted in chaffing and interrupting the actors with irrelevant puns and clownish mimicry. The middle classes occupied the galleries and often enjoyed the spontaneous sallies of wit and repartee between the gallants and the players more than they enjoyed the play itself. The "tag-rag," or what then might have been regarded as we regard our present-day "gallery gods," occupied the pit, and when not dodging the not infrequent missiles hurled from the stage, or the snow or rain from the open firmament, they could appreciate a good comedy or a real drama as well as could the more favored occupants of the reserved places. The stage had no scenery, that being first introduced by Davenant after the Restoration. There were no rise and fall of a curtain to mark the opening and close of a scene. The entrance to the stage was strewn with rushes instead of being carpeted; the walls were hung with arras; a large board with names painted on it indicated where the scenes of the play being produced were laid. For tragedies the walls were hung with black tapestry; Shakespeare speaks of "Black stage for tragedies and murders fell" ("Lucrece"); and History, addressing Comedy, says:

Look, Comedy, I mark'd it not till now,
The stage is hung with black, and I perceive
The auditors prepar'd for tragedie.

A Warning for Fair Women.

Before the Restoration women's parts were acted by boys, and even among the audience no woman might appear unless masked. The union of the serious and the comic in the same play was common, and clowns were apt to thrust themselves

upon the stage on all occasions, much to the annoyance of Shakespeare himself. (See *Hamlet*, III., ii., 43.) The costume and many other stage accessories were almost entirely lacking, and the few that were used were usually inappropriate. Thus the gorgeous stage setting of the present day, which adds so much to the successful presentation of the drama, had to be supplied by the keen imagination of the audience; and here we get a fair appreciation of the high degree of intelligence demanded from theater-goers of the Elizabethan period.

VI. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DRAMA

“A drama undertakes to tell a story by presenting a few episodes or situations from which the entire course of the action can be inferred. Inasmuch as these scenes are to be presented in rapid succession to an audience, they must be not only clear and easy to follow, but, to be interesting, they must also afford opportunity for striking, significant action on the part of the characters. Further, inasmuch as in a drama the author has no opportunity to tell his audience directly what he thinks of his characters, these latter must reveal their natures and purposes by their attitude toward one another, as manifested in speech or action. It is most important that every action in a drama be explained, prepared for, given a motive, by something which has already taken place, or some trait of character already indicated.”—*Robert Morss Lovett.*

VII. DATE OF COMPOSITION OF *HAMLET*

On July 26, 1602, James Roberts, a printer of London, entered upon the register of the Stationers' Company,* “A booke called The Revenge of Hamlett Prince Denmarke as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberlayne his Servantes.” In 1603 the First

* A company incorporated in London in 1557. It had a monopoly of the registration of all publications down to the passing of the Copyright Act in 1842.

Quarto, Q₁, consisting of 32 pages, 2143 lines, was entered on the register of the Stationers' Company with this title: "The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, by William Shakespeare. As it hath been diverse times acted by his Highnesse servantes in the Cittie of London; as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and Elsewhere. At London printed for N. L. and John T. Trundell, 1603." This edition is undoubtedly pirated, and may have been produced from notes taken during the representation of the play. It differs materially from the second Quarto, Q₂, the authorized edition, which was entered upon the Stationers' Register in 1604 with the title: "The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke. By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie." This is the best of the quartos, and is supposed to be as Shakespeare had left it.

From the foregoing it is evident no exact date can be assigned for the publication of *Hamlet*, but it is very probable the first version was written during the years 1601-2, and the second during 1603-4. Three other Quartos followed the first two, but each of these was merely a copy of the one preceding. In 1623 *Hamlet* appeared in the First Folio, F₁, an edition of Shakespeare's complete works. This version was different from and in some respects inferior to the second Quarto. The First Folio was followed by three others at various times. The present edition is a combination of Q₂ and F₁.

VIII. SOURCE OF THE PLAY

In 1208, Saxo Grammaticus, a Danish writer, a native of Elsinore, wrote *Historica Danica*, a Latin history of Denmark. The Legend of Amleth or Hamlet appears in the third and fourth books, and is taken from the Icelandic *Saga of Danish Kings*. Belleforest, a French writer, published at Paris in 1570, his *Histories Tragiques*. The fifth volume contains the legend of Amleth. In 1608, some years after the publication of

Hamlet, there appeared an English translation of Belleforest's Amleth known as the *Hystorie of Hamblet*. There may have been earlier translations but this is the only one extant. The legend, however, seems to have been well known and appears to have been embodied in previous plays. From these, Shakespeare is supposed to have gathered materials for the framework of his plot. The following brief sketch will show the points of resemblance between the *Legend of Amleth* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*:

Two brothers, Horvendile and Fengon, are appointed by Roderick, king of Denmark, governors over two provinces of his kingdom. Horvendile wins renown as a Vi-king and, in single combat, slays Collere, king of Norway. Roderick receives a large share of the spoil, and gives Horvendile his daughter Geruth in marriage. Horvendile and Geruth have a son, Amleth. Fengon falls in love with Geruth and wins her affection. He secretly murders his brother, marries Geruth, and obtains his brother's province. Amleth suspects his uncle, and to prove the truth of his suspicions, as well as to save his own life, he feigns madness. Plots are laid to test whether the madness is real or feigned. Not being able to satisfy himself, Fengon sends Amleth to Britain. With him go two servants who are intrusted with secret letters, desiring the king of Britain to slay Amleth. On the voyage Amleth secures and reads the letters, and so alters them that the servants, on their arrival in England, are hanged in his stead. Amleth returns to Denmark, where he finds his own funeral rites being celebrated. He sets fire to the castle, kills the king, reveals the reason for his feigned madness, and ascends the throne.

IX. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAY

"To the common public *Hamlet* is a famous piece by a famous poet, with crime, a ghost, battle, and carnage; and that is sufficient. To the youthful enthusiast *Hamlet* is a piece handling the mystery of the universe, and having throughout cadences, phrases, and words full of the divinest Shakespearean

magic; and that too is sufficient. To the pedant, finally, *Hamlet* is an occasion for airing his psychology; and what does pedant require more? But to the spectator who loves true and powerful drama, and can judge whether he gets it or not, *Hamlet* is a piece which opens, indeed, simply and admirably, and then, 'The rest is puzzle!' . . . *Hamlet* thus comes at last to be not a drama followed with perfect comprehension and profoundest emotion, which is the ideal for tragedy, but a problem soliciting interpretation and solution. It will never, therefore, be a piece to be seen with pure satisfaction by those who will not deceive themselves. But such is its power and such is its fame that it will always continue to be acted, and we shall all of us continue to go and see it.'—**Matthew Arnold*, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

X. CHARACTER INTERPRETATION

The following simple rules are intended to guide students of the play to form their own estimate of the various characters, a much more useful and interesting process than that of merely committing to memory the opinions of others:

1. In judging the character of any of the dramatis personæ take into account what is said of him by his companions. Hamlet himself will assist you to form a general estimate of almost every other character in the play.
2. In estimating a person's character by what he himself says, note attentively the circumstances under which he speaks. Most of the hints from which we may form a correct estimate of Hamlet's character are found in his own soliloquies. In conversation with other characters Hamlet often, purposely, misrepresents himself.
3. Do not interpret character by single incidents. Many details must be looked upon in the light of the general view. Polonius must not be regarded as a sage because he gives

* Arnold, Matthew, born at Laleham, England, 1822; died in 1888. A noted English literary critic and poet.

wise counsel to Laertes. Compare his speeches with his actions, and it will be found that, as Goethe says, he speaks like a book, when he is prepared beforehand, and like an ass, when he utters the overflowings of his heart.

4. Watch the development of character as time progresses. Form for yourself a general idea of what each character may have been before the period of the play, and observe the effect of circumstances and surroundings upon that character. Hamlet would have presented a very different figure if he had not had a duty imposed upon him, for the performance of which he was by nature unfitted.
5. Observe carefully all contrasts. Shakespeare generally adds to the interest of his characterization by contrast or by duplication. Laertes and Fortinbras are both placed in strongest contrast to Hamlet. Horatio forms a contrast to almost all the other characters of the play; and Hamlet himself expresses the contrast between his father and his step-father.
6. Finally, read carefully, and act upon these cautions and hints by Coleridge.* "If you take only what the friends of the character say, you may be deceived, and still more so, if that which his enemies say; nay, even the character himself sees himself through the medium of his character, and not exactly as he is. Take all together, not omitting a shrewd hint from the clown or the fool, and perhaps your impression will be right; and you may know whether you have in fact discovered the poet's own idea, by all the speeches receiving light from it, and attesting its reality by reflecting it."

Shakespeare "clothed the creatures of his legend with form and sentiments, as if they were people who had lived under his roof; and few real men have left such distinct characters as these fictions."—†*Emerson*.

* Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, born at Ottery St. Mary, 1772; died 1834. An English poet, philosopher, and literary critic.

† Emerson, Ralph Waldo, born at Boston, Mass., 1803; died 1882. A celebrated American essayist, lecturer, and poet.

"It is common for people to talk of Shakespeare's plays, being so natural, that everybody can understand him. They are natural, indeed they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us."—**Lamb*.

"We talk of Shakespeare's admirable observation of life, when we should feel that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and everyday characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's, the very 'sphere of humanity,' he fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us, recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our nature the whole."—**Lamb*.

XI. CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

Claudius, King of Denmark

Prominent among the characteristics of this poisoner and smiling villain is his hypocrisy. He can speak of the king, whom he has murdered, as "Hamlet, our dear brother," for whom he and his kingdom grieve "in one brow of woe;" he can speak of the affection he bears the Prince, whom he has deprived of his lawful succession to the throne:

And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you.—I. ii. 110.

In order to keep him under surveillance, he begs him to remain

Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.—I. ii. 116.

While in the act of making arrangements for Hamlet's murder he affects a tender regard for his "especial safety,"

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done.—IV. iii. 45.

* Lamb, Charles, born at London, England, 1775; died 1834. A noted critic, humorist, and man of letters.

As many of his speeches give evidence of the blackest hypocrisy, so his actions, as might be expected from a crafty, double-minded schemer, are often the result of deep-laid plots. He sets spies on Hamlet's movements, and even plays the spy himself. With acuteness and cunning, which he describes as "majesty and skill," he handles the threatening Laertes, and strives on all occasions to avert suspicion from himself. "To bear all smooth and even" is his continual thought; hence, speaking of Hamlet's "mission" to England, he says,

This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause.—IV. iii. 8.

But all his craft avails him nothing, and his best-laid schemes are doomed to failure. The death of Polonius and his interment "in hugger-mugger" result in rendering the people "muddled, thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers," and these whispers, "as level as the cannon to his blank," make the king their mark.

Suspicion that "ever haunts the guilty mind," naturally finds a ready lodging in the soul of Claudius. From the first he regards the "lunacy" of Hamlet as "dangerous." After playing the spy he becomes assured that love is not the cause of Hamlet's madness:

There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,
Will be some danger:—III. i. 169.

Being seized with what his flatterers call, "most holy and religious fear," he sends the Prince to England, giving as his reason that,

The terms of our estate may not endure,
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.—III. iii. 5.

He harps unceasingly upon this fear. He suspects the blow that struck Polonius down was aimed at him: "It had been so with us, had we been there." "How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!" And, demanding Hamlet's death at the hands of the King of England, he lays bare his wretched soul,

For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.—IV. iii. 70.

To refer to the conscience of one whose hand is "thicker than itself with brother's blood," and whose heart depends on "springs of steel," may appear to be a perversion of the word, but Shakespeare, knowing that no man was ever utterly lost to all sense of right, has in accordance with nature represented Claudius as possessing a conscience which could at least suffer remorse. There is no reason for supposing that he did not love the queen, though knavery enabled him to conceal his feelings at her death. Hamlet's device to "catch the conscience of the king" was successful, and Polonius unwittingly attained a similar result:

how smart

A lash that speech doth give my conscience!—III. i. 49.

More than once he wishes the deed undone, but only on an impossible condition. He asks most pertinently, "May one be pardoned and retain the offence?" III. iii. 57. He is fully conscious of the two-fold efficacy of prayer, yet he cannot pray; neither can he repent:

Try what repentance can: what can it not?

Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?—III. iii. 66.

Thus he palters with his conscience, and his state of mind is truly wretched. Punishment proportionate to his crimes overtakes him, and in anguish he cries out that every new trouble, "like to a murdering-piece in many places," gives him "superfluous death."

He is coarse-minded, licentious, drunken. Hamlet contrasts his own father with Claudius, "Hyperion to a satyr;" and in another place he speaks of the latter as "a mildew'd ear, blasting his wholesome brother." He describes the "heavy-headed revel" in which the king takes the leading part:

The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.—I. iv. 8.

The ghost of the murdered Hamlet describes him as, "That incestuous, that adulterate beast;" and Hamlet himself can find no epithet strong enough to express his loathing. In his opinion he is "a murderer and a villain," "a Vice of kings,"

A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket.—III. iv. 98,

"a king of shreds and patches," a "bloat king," "a paddock," "a bat, a gib." He is filled with amazement that a man so plausible can be so wicked, and turning his thoughts to generalization, as is his wont, marvels "that one may smile, and smile, and be a villain."

As a king Claudius is not altogether despicable. He is energetic, eager to conciliate, and specious. Fortinbras, "holding a weak supposal of his worth," finds that he is not to be contemned. With regard to Hamlet, he acts "with quick determination," and sends him to England with all possible dispatch. He can be resourceful and brave in an emergency, and can maintain his composure in the face of Laertes' "giant-like rebellion:"

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would.—IV. v. 105.

“The king himself is a mass of deception and hypocrisy; he is a practiced actor, and the perfect master of his looks and movements, and of all his words and actions; his guilty designs are supported in every case by maturely-weighed and well-contrived plans.”—**Ulrici*.

“No inward virtues adorn the hypocritical ‘laughing villain;’ unless it be that quick perception of his understanding and of his guilty conscience, which makes him attentive to every change and threat, which makes him interpret every event, every word, every sigh, which makes him gather round him with skillful grasp the weakest spies and tools.”—†*Gervinus*.

The Queen

The Queen is more the instrument of crime than she is a criminal. She is a weak woman, but not consciously wicked or depraved. She is “seeming-virtuous,” and no doubt deceives herself till she comes to imagine herself really so. She yields readily to the wiles of Claudius, and so gives rise to Hamlet’s reflection upon the sex, “Frailty, thy name is woman.” She lives a brief widowhood, although her own better feeling tells her that her second marriage is “o’erhasty,” and she weakly allows herself to be made the tool of both Claudius and Polonius. Not until Hamlet sets up a glass wherein she can see the heinousness of her conduct, does she realize how low she has fallen. Then she sees within her soul

such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.—III. iv. 90.

Henceforth she leans upon her son rather than upon her husband, and does what she can to repair the wrong she has committed.

Her emotion illustrates the truth of the Player’s maxim,

* *Ulrici*, Hermann, born at Pforten, Prussia, 1806; died at Halle, Prussia, 1884. A German theistic philosopher and critic.

† *Gervinus*, George Gottfried, born at Darmstadt, Germany, 1805; died at Heidelberg, 1871. A celebrated German historian and critic.

“Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament.” This emotion, however, is neither deep-seated nor lasting. She mourns the loss of her first husband “like Niobe, all tears,” but “within a month,”

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her gallèd eyes,
She married.—I. ii. 154.

She passionately loves her son, and “lives almost by his looks,” but her love, selfish rather than sympathetic, does not enable her to understand him. The bitterness of his reproofs and the strangeness of his behavior drive her almost mad, so that the Ghost is constrained to bid Hamlet “step between her and her fighting soul,” reminding him that “Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.” After Hamlet has exhibited her crimes to her sick soul, “Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss.”

The play affords no evidence that she connived at her husband’s murder. On the contrary, all the evidence points to the fact that her first knowledge of the crime came from Hamlet. Her surprise at the charge of killing a king was not feigned, and her conscience was not touched, as Claudius’ was, during the representation of the Interlude. Moreover, the ghost of her first husband appeared to retain some affection for her, and had warned Hamlet not to taint his mind or let his soul contrive aught against her. Finally, when once she learned the manner of her husband’s death she took the part of Hamlet against Claudius, from whom henceforth she hid all her “dear concernings.”

Again, her kind and loving treatment of the sweet Ophelia will always “plead with angel tongues” against her accusers. “The affection of the wicked queen for this gentle and innocent creature is one of those beautiful and redeeming touches, one of those penetrating glances into the secret springs of natural and feminine feeling, which we find only in Shakespeare.”—**Mrs. Jameson*.

* *Mrs. Jameson, nee Anna Brownell Murphy*, born at Dublin, 1794; died 1860. An extensive writer on art and literature.

“The timid, self-indulgent, sensuous, sentimental queen is as remote from true woman’s virtue as Claudius is from the virtues of royal manhood.”—**Dowden*.

“In the queen we discern the confidence of a guilty mind, that by the artifice of self-deceit, has put to silence the upbraidings of conscience.”—†*Richardson*.

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

In the analysis of Hamlet’s character, we will endeavor, first to discover what Hamlet was, by nature and by education, before the period of the play; then by observing his attitude toward those who surrounded him, and his behavior under all circumstances we may arrive at a correct appreciation of those mental and moral qualities, the sum of which constitutes what is known as character.

Hamlet may be regarded as having been fair of countenance, for he was of Scandinavian descent, and of a somewhat phlegmatic, not to say indolent, disposition. He was of slight build, as may be gathered from the comparison he draws between his uncle and his father,

My father’s brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules.—I. ii. 152.

His mother’s statement that “he is fat, and scant of breath,” need not be taken literally, for she is speaking under the influence of great emotion and great fear, and in her love for her son she naturally exaggerates the contrast which he presents to the more striking figure of Laertes. Undoubtedly he inherited from his father

A station like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill.—III. iv. 58;

* Dowden, Edward, born at Cork, Ireland, 1843; still alive (1916). An eminent Irish critic and poet.

† Richardson, William, born at Aberfoyle, Scotland, 1743; died 1814. A noted Scotch essayist, poet, and Shakespearean scholar.

and the amiability of his countenance and the grace of his person made him the darling of the Queen, who "lives upon his looks," and of the populace, "who like not with their judgment, but their eyes." Admitting that Ophelia regarded him with partial eyes, and allowing for natural exaggeration, he is still a noble and princely youth:

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers.—III. i. 156.

"Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth, and the joy of the world."—**Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.*

By nature Hamlet was of a cheerful though quiet disposition. In his childhood he had played with Yorick, "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," whose lips he had kissed he knew not how often. He had delighted in those "flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar." The melancholy which he exhibits in the course of the play appears to his former friends and acquaintance unnatural and unaccountable:

(Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was.—II. ii. 4.)

In the play he is humorous and witty, and is cheerful and unserved when he forgets his troubles, as in his first interview with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, or when he entertains the strolling players, II. ii. (But his disposition to humor is often changed by the pressure of circumstances. This is manifest in his satiric conversations with Polonius and Osric, or in his quaint, familiar

* Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, born at Frankfort-on-the-Main, 1749; died 1832. A famous German poet, dramatist, and prose-writer; the greatest name in German literature.

language, recalling perhaps the habits of a former and almost forgotten age, as when he addresses the Ghost,

Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?
Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—I. v. 132.

He is by nature a hater of shams, a despiser of artifice and dissimulation, scrupulous even in the smallest matters, a seeker after the truth, a true friend, a gentle and devoted son, and a warm but not passionate lover.

“One of the deepest characteristics of Hamlet's nature is a longing for sincerity, for truth in mind and manners, an aversion from all that is false, affected, or exaggerated.”—**Dowden*.

“To a frame of mind naturally strong and contemplative, but rendered by extraordinary events skeptical and intensely thoughtful, he unites an undeviating love of rectitude, a disposition of the gentlest kind, feelings the most delicate and pure, and a sensibility painfully alive to the smallest deviation from virtue or propriety of conduct.”—†*Drake*.

His first thought after receiving the injunction of his father's ghost is to

wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there.—I. v. 81.

He frequently expresses himself in abstractions and generalities, thus indicating a cultivated mind. This he does even when most violently moved, as when he says,

My tables,—meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.—I. v. 89;

and again

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.—I. v. 148.

* See footnote, p. 32.

† Drake, Nathan, born at York, England, 1776; died 1836. An English physician and author.

He has left the University of Wittenberg, and is living in a gay and frivolous court. He "keeps aloof," and continues his studies. He is a critic of the drama, and can appreciate "an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning." He has some experience in writing dramas, and has studied the actor's art and everything pertaining to it. (See III, ii. 1-40.)

"He is essentially a man of letters; he carries memorandum books with him; allusions to his reading are ready to him; in advanced years he was still at the University, and longed to return there. . . . No royal ambition urges him to the society of his equals; his associate is the scholar Horatio, the friend of his school days and his fellow-student."—**Gervinus*.

He abhors the custom of drinking, and the "heavy headed revel" which then seemed to characterize the Danish court. "To my mind," he says,

though I am native here
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.—I. iv. 14.

The mind is his kingdom, and his thoughts and speculations are more to him than are the common realities of life. The ambition of Fortinbras stirs him not. (His mother's want of modesty and shame, and the king's grossness affect him more profoundly than does the crime of murder. In refinement and culture he is in advance of his age. "Forgive me this my virtue," he says to his mother,

For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo, for leave to do him good.—III. iv. 151.)

"Pure in sentiment, he knew the honorable-minded, and could prize the rest which an upright spirit tastes on the bosom

* See footnote, p. 30.

of a friend. To a certain degree, he had learned to discern and value the good and the beautiful in arts and sciences; the mean and the vulgar were offensive to him; and if hatred could take root in his tender soul, it was only so far as to make him properly despise the false and changeful insects of a court, and play with them in easy scorn.”—**Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*.

“Exquisitely sensible of moral beauty and deformity, he discerns turpitude in a parent. Surprise, on a discovery so painful and unexpected, adds bitterness to his sorrow.”—†*Richardson*.

“O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!” cries out Ophelia at the end of that interview in which Hamlet so successfully played the part of a man “blasted with ecstasy”; and she goes on to speak of

that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled.—III. i. 162,

from which we may infer how high had been his reputation for intellectual power. With shrewd penetration he reads correctly the thoughts, the motives, and the character of others, and is not deceived by Polonius, by his former school-fellows, nor by Ophelia.

“In Hamlet he seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses, and our meditation on the workings of our minds—an *equilibrium* between the real and imaginary worlds. In Hamlet this balance is disturbed; his thoughts, and the images of his fancy, are far more vivid than his actual perceptions. . . . Hence we see a great, an almost enormous, intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it.”—‡*Coleridge*.

* See footnote, p. 33.

† See footnote, p. 32.

‡ See footnote, p. 25.

His grief for his dead father is profound ; he carries his image constantly in his mind :

Ham. My father!—methinks I see my father.

Hor. Where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.—I. ii. 183.

He has all the sensibilities of a meditative nature, and though he is not demonstrative, yet he is unable to repress entirely the outward indications of what is going on within him. He says truly, "I have that within which passeth show." His emotion is shown by his irritability towards his uncle and his mother ; it is evident in his weaknesses exhibited later on in sudden and violent passions followed by complete exhaustion :

He weeps for what is done.—IV. i. 27.

And thus awhile the fit will work on him ;

Anon, as patient as the female dove,

When that her golden couplets are disclosed,

His silence will sit drooping.—V. i. 308.

His apparent cruelty and rudeness towards Ophelia result probably from his attempts to restrain his overwrought emotions. His wavering attitude with respect to religion is due to a continued conflict between his emotions and his reason, between instinctive faith and intellectual doubt.

"Hamlet is not merely or chiefly intellectual ; the emotional side of his character is quite as important as the intellectual ; his malady is as deep seated in his sensibilities and in his heart as it is in the brain. If all his feelings translate themselves into thoughts, it is no less true that all his thoughts are impregnated with feeling."—**Dowden*.

The characteristics which most impress the student or the spectator of the play are Hamlet's settled melancholy and his irresolution. His melancholy often renders him sarcastic and morose ; his irresolution gives rise to indolence, doubts, incon-

* See footnote, p. 32.

sistency, fatalism, and impulsive action. This melancholic disposition becomes manifest at the very outset of the drama when he appears with "dejected haviour of the visage," mourning for his father. The Queen beseeches him,

Do not, for ever, with thy vailèd lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.—I. ii. 70.

His uncle bids him "throw to earth this unprevailing woe." The company passes out and he is left alone. His first words indicate the depths of despair to which he has fallen through grief and through indulgence in a mysterious foreboding of evil:

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!—I. ii. 129.

Polonius has observed his melancholy, and puts his own false construction upon it,

And he, repulsèd—a short tale to make—
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;—II. ii. 147.

In conversation with his old school-fellows Hamlet describes the change that has taken place within him.

I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire,—why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.—II. ii. 312.

Thus he has come to look with a jaundiced eye upon all nature, physical and human, in which he once delighted. He speculates on death, and meditates suicide; he "walks for hours together" in the palace hall, his gait and visage bespeaking woe. The king fears him,

There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;—III. i. 169.

After the Players' recitation he refers to his melancholy, ingeniously weaving it into one of the many excuses by which he habitually deceives himself as to the cause of his inaction. "Perhaps," he says, "the devil

Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me:—II. ii. 641.

He haunts graveyards, he is stirred to a passionate excitement at the sight of Laertes, "whose grief bears such an emphasis," and would "make a match with him in shedding tears."

His wit and humor of former days have now become bitter sarcasm or withering irony. He speaks of the king in terms of haughty disdain or of scornful disgust. During the Interlude he takes a keen delight in lashing the king's conscience,

'Tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? your majesty,
and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade
wince, our withers are unwrung.—III. ii. 238.

His mocking words are daggers to the queen, his mother:

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide?—III. iv. 182.

Under the cloak of madness he utters cutting truths to Polonius, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and plays satirically with the foppish courtier, Osric. He endangers his own safety by addressing words of double meaning to his uncle, the king, who is all the while suspicious of him. "Farewell, dear mother," he says to him on leaving for England,

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother.—IV. iii. 54.

(First his father's death throws him into profound grief; then the impropriety of his mother's behavior, her ingratitude to the memory of her former husband, and her choice of such

a man as Claudius to be her second spouse, offend his refined spirit, and afflict his soul. Add to these causes a suspicion of his uncle's guilt, which suspicion later becomes a certainty, a consciousness of his duty to avenge his father's death, and a knowledge of the difficulty of performing this duty. All these causes, acting upon a nature formed for meditation and a tranquil life, throw him into a state of melancholy which soon becomes a permanent condition.)

"It has been objected to the character of Hamlet, whose most striking feature is profound melancholy, that its keeping is broken in upon by an injudicious admixture of humor and gaiety; but he who is acquainted with the workings of the human heart will be far, very far indeed, from considering this as any deviation from the truth of nature. Melancholy, when not the offspring of an ill-spent life . . ., will sometimes spring with playful elasticity from the pressure of the heaviest burden, and dissipating, for a moment, the anguish of a breaking heart, will, like a sunbeam in a winter's day, illumine all around it with a bright but transient ray . . . an interchange which serves but to render the returning storm more deep and gloomy.'"—**Drake*.

(It may be well to consider, under various aspects, Hamlet's irresolution as the predominating feature of his complex character. After pointing out the different occasions upon which he exhibits it, we shall show how it acts upon other phases of his character, making him inconsistent, skeptical, a fatalist, cunning, and even cruel. We shall further show how it brings its own punishment not only upon Hamlet himself, but upon others as well; and finally we shall attempt an explanation of its cause.

1. He does nothing immediately after receiving the Ghost's commands. We shall indicate later that his madness was not assumed with any view of furthering his revenge.
2. He allows two months to pass without taking any steps to compass his object.

* See footnote, p. 34.

3. He neglects the opportunity to kill the king while the king is at prayer. His decision to allow him to escape at such a moment is only part of his general irresolution.
4. He trusts the judgment of Horatio rather than his own to watch the effect of the play upon the king. Having attained his purpose, he rejoices in the success of his stratagem, but this confirmation of his suspicions leads to no action on his part.
5. He allows himself to be sent to England, away from the object of his revenge.
6. The promptings of his heart forbid the encounter with Laertes, V. ii. 224, but he heeds not these promptings nor will he listen to the advice of Horatio, V. ii. 231, to postpone the duel.

After listening to the Players he shows that he is sensible of his weakness. Contrasting himself with the Actor, he says:

What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have?—II. ii. 597.

For it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal.—II. ii. 615.

He touches the secret of his indecision in his famous soliloquy on death and suicide when he says:

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—III. i. 80.

When the Ghost comes between him and his terrified mother, he knows, before it speaks, that the visitation is to remind him of his "almost blunted purpose:"

Do you not come your tardy son to chide
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?—III. iv. 105.

Again the consciousness of his own irresolution strikes him most forcibly by contrast with the impetuous ardor of Fortinbras:

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge!—IV. iv. 31.

How stand I, then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep?—IV. iv. 55.

Finally, in conversation with Horatio, he shows how clearly it is his duty to slay the king that had killed his father, stained his mother, excluded himself from the throne, and angled for his life:

is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?—V. ii. 67.

“There is no indecision about Hamlet, as far as his own sense of duty is concerned; he knows well what he ought to do, and over and over again he makes up his mind to do it.”—**Coleridge*.

To such an extent does irresolution work upon Hamlet's character that it tends to give the superficial reader a false impression of his true nature. In the following paragraphs we have attempted to show to what extent his character changes under this influence.

Infirmity of purpose, joined to a natural nobility of instinct and impulse, cannot fail to lead to many inconsistencies. In this respect Hamlet resembles the great majority of mortals,

Who see the right and do approve it too,
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue.†

Not only are Hamlet's actions inconsistent with his opinions, his purposes, and his thoughts, but his thoughts themselves are

* See footnote, p. 25.

† Compare Ovid Met. vii. 29.

inconsistent with one another. This kind of inconsistency is manifested generally in his reflections on matters connected with religion. We may discern it in his skepticism.

At the beginning of the play he is an adherent of all the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. He believes in purgatory, in hell, in the devil, and in the miraculous power of confession, holy communion, and extreme unction. At one time he gives credence to the re-appearance of the dead in order to reveal and punish murder; at another time he speaks of

The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns.—III. i. 76.

In one breath he declares, "It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you;" in another, he strives to persuade himself that

The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil.—II. ii. 638.

Toward the end of the play, reason almost ceases to be his guide. He has persuaded himself that

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall.—V. ii. 8.

His carefully prepared schemes prove abortive, because, though full of purpose, he is "void of that quality of the mind which accomplishes purpose."—**Coleridge*. He willingly allows himself to drift, and becomes a fatalist. He "worships fatality, and he is apt to regard whatever pertains thereto as incontestable, solemn, and beautiful. . . . The unbending, malignant goddess is more acceptable than the divinity, who only asks for an effort that shall avert disaster."—†*Maeterlinck*. He excuses his inaction by attributing it to a decree of fate:

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.—V. ii. 10

* See footnote, p. 25.

† *Maeterlinck*, Maurice, born 1864; still living 1916. A noted Belgian poet.

are the words with which he disclaims responsibility for his own questionable conduct, e.g. the opening the sealed packet and sending his school-fellows to death. Before the duel with Laertes he again gives expression to his fatalistic convictions.

There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come.—V. ii. 234.

“Hamlet has no firm belief either in himself or in anything else; from expressions of religious confidence he passes over to skeptical doubts. . . . He has even gone so far as to say, ‘There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.’”—**Schlegel*.

“Thus all through the play he wavers between materialism and spiritualism, between belief in immortality and disbelief, between reliance upon providence and a bowing under fate.”—†*Dowden*.

“Shakespeare’s teaching is, that if the nobler-gifted man who stands at the head of the commonwealth, allows himself to be driven about by every wind of the occasion, instead of furthering his better aims with all his strength and energy of will, the wicked, on their part, will all the more easily carry out their own ends.”—‡*Feis*.

As is usually the case with irresolute persons, Hamlet frequently acts from impulse or from blind passion. The consequence is he often performs deeds of which he afterwards repents. Such are the murder of Polonius and the struggle with Laertes in the grave. At other times he acts without reflection and afterwards persuades himself that he has done wisely. On the ship he acts before he can “make a prologue to his brains,” and becomes accessory to the murder of two innocent men. His impulsiveness is in reality but a sign of his irresolution. He

* Schlegel, August Wilhelm von, born at Hanover, Germany, 1767; died 1845. A celebrated German critic and poet.

† See footnote, p. 32.

‡ Feis, Jacob, author of *Shakespeare and Montaigne*, published in 1884.

follows his father's ghost in a state of wild excitement, uttering the threat, "By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me." When the travelling players arrive in Elsinore he proposes immediate action. "We'll e'en to 't like French falconers fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight." And when at last he stabs the king the action is unpremeditated. This irresolution has the further evil effect of making him a deceptive, shrewd, and cunning contriver. He sacrifices innocent men with cold premeditation and rejoices at their destruction:

For 'tis the sport, to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petard: and 't shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—III. iv. 199.

"He who is so irritable an enemy to all dissimulation, falsehood, and cunning, venturing not upon the straight path to action, he himself takes the crooked way of cunning circumlocution and deceiving dissimulation."—**Gervinus*.

"He is made for honesty, and he is compelled to practice a shifting and subtle strategy; thus he comes to waste himself in ingenuity and crafty device."—†*Dowden*.

To resist temptation is to strengthen character, to give way to it is to weaken the power of resistance. Hamlet gives way to his natural tendency to think rather than to act. Consequently his character deteriorates as has been shown on p. 40 and *seq.* The effect of his irresolution upon himself is a continual torture of mind which he expresses thus:

Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.—V. ii. 4.

It results in his own death and in the death of others, of the innocent as well as of the guilty. Horatio promises to explain

* See footnote, p. 30.

† See footnote, p. 32.

the dismal sight with which the play concludes. "So shall you hear," he says,

Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forced cause;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads.—V. ii. 399.

"In the first tumult of his feelings, and without adequate cause, he throws away the fair flower of Ophelia's love, which he himself had planted and watered; with inconsiderate rashness he kills the old dotard Polonius in mistake for the guilty king, and so brings upon himself the blame of causing Ophelia's madness and death. By a just retribution a tragic end overwhelms Hamlet himself, so quickly and unexpectedly, that he has scarcely time for the hurried and precipitate accomplishment of his long meditated purpose."—**Ulrici*.

The irresolution of Hamlet appears to arise from several causes, of which the following seem to be the principal:

1. He is naturally prone to think rather than to act. Being continually wrapped in thought he forgets action:

And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.—III. i. 81.

But this cause alone is not enough to account for his indecision, for the necessity for action is often borne in upon him.

2. Moral scruples and a Christian spirit deter him. The particular action that is required of him is most abhorrent to his sensitive and scrupulous spirit. He hesitates lest he should do

such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on.—III. ii. 404.

* See footnote, p. 30.

3. The difficulty of his task he expresses in the lines:

The time is out of joint:—O cursèd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!—I. v. 171.

His vivid imagination exaggerates the difficulties, and his natural modesty fills him with a sense of his own insufficiency.

“To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. An oak is planted in a costly jar, which should have contained only the sweetest flowers; the root expands, the jar is burst asunder.

“A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear and must not cast away.”—**Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*.

“Hamlet is called upon to assert moral order in a world of moral confusion and obscurity. He has not an open plain or a hillside on which to fight his battle; but a place dangerous and misleading, with dim and winding ways. . . . In the wide-spreading waste of corruption which lies around him, he is tempted to understand and detest things, rather than accomplish some limited practical service. In the unweeded garden of the world, why should he task his life to uproot a single weed?”—†*Dowden*.

We think Laertes estimates Hamlet's conduct towards Ophelia by the standard of his own behavior, when he speaks of “the trifling of his favour,” and bids her regard it as a pastime,

Forward, not permanent; sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.—I. iii. 8.

But even he did not—as some critics have done—charge Hamlet with practicing conscious deception upon Ophelia:

* See footnote, p. 33.

† See footnote, p. 32.

Perhaps he loves you now;
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will.—I. iii. 14.

Of Ophelia's love for him there can be no doubt, although she never confesses it. She yields, perhaps, too ready an obedience to her brother and her father, but she certainly places a most implicit trust in the honor of her lover,

My lord, he hath importuned me with love,
In honourable fashion.—I. iii. 110.

The interview described by Ophelia, but not presented on the stage, takes place after Hamlet has seen his father's Ghost and received his injunctions. No doubt Hamlet on this occasion approaches Ophelia with the intention, which he afterwards carries out, of renouncing woman, "the begetter of all evil in the world, who makes such monsters of wise men." The depth of the love he feels for her is clearly shown by the picture of the agony he suffers at taking leave of her, when

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being.—II. i. 90.

He continues to love her, but he will not have her know it. When he says,

Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia!—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.—III. i. 85,

the words are not intended to reach her ears. When she turns to him he feigns madness again, perhaps with a view, as Lamb says, "to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do." We believe he speaks from his heart of hearts when he exclaims:

I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
 Could not, with all their quantity of love,
 Make up my sum.—V. i. 292.

“His conduct to Ophelia is quite natural in his circumstances. It is that of assumed madness only. It is the effect of disappointed hope, of bitter regrets, of affection suspended, not obliterated, by the distractions of the scene around him. . . . He could neither marry Ophelia nor wound her mind by explaining the cause of his alienation, which he durst hardly trust himself to think of. . . . In the harassed state of his mind, he could not have done much otherwise than he did.”—**Hazlitt*.

“I do think, with submission, that the love of Hamlet for Ophelia is deep, is real, and is precisely the kind of love which such a man as Hamlet would feel for such a woman as Ophelia.”—†*Mrs. Jameson*.

“He loved her more than a thousand brothers, with all their love put together could have done.”—‡*Heine*.

The question is sometimes asked, Was Hamlet really mad, or did he merely assume madness? Common sense at once replies that he was perfectly sane, and that he feigned madness only that he might deceive others. Medical authorities are at variance on the point, probably owing to the difficulty they experience in attaching a precise and definite significance to the word madness. We may consider his conduct under three phases:

1. When he both appears to be and is perfectly sane.
2. When he appears mad but is only feigning madness, as in
 - (a) His interview with Polonius, whom he wishes to deceive, II. ii;

* Hazlitt, William, born at Maidstone, England, 1778; died 1830. An English critic and essayist.

† See footnote, p. 31.

‡ Heine, Heinrich, born at Düsseldorf, Germany, 1799; died at Paris, 1856. A celebrated German lyric poet and critic, of Hebrew descent.

- (b) His interview with Ophelia, whom he cannot trust with his secret, III. i;
 - (c) His interview with Claudius, whom he wishes both to deceive and to punish, IV. iii.
3. When, under the immediate influence of some stupendous shock, his intellect staggers, but is not overthrown, as
- (a) After seeing his father's spirit, I. v;
 - (b) On hearing of Ophelia's death and perceiving Laertes' manifestations of grief, V. i.

It is only in this third phase that Hamlet's conduct lends color to the assumption that he is really mad, and not merely "mad in craft." We acknowledge, as he himself does, that on the first of the two occasions referred to, his mind was disordered and his disposition horribly shaken "With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls," and that on the second occasion he forgets himself, and that, too, for insufficient reason:

But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.—V. ii. 79.

But if to be violently agitated, and in our agitation to perform actions which in our saner moments we should not dream of, is to be mad, which of us is sane?

The obvious reasons for considering Hamlet's madness as feigned, are:

1. His actions are perfectly sane until his interview with the Ghost. After this interview he warns his friends that he may perchance "put an antic disposition on."
2. He appears mad only in the presence of those whom he wishes to deceive. He talks rationally and shows great intellectual power in conversation with Horatio, his school-fellows, the Players, and in his soliloquies.
3. He earnestly and urgently exhorts his mother not to "lay that flattering unction to her soul" that he is speaking to

her "in madness," offering to prove to her his perfect sanity:

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music; it is not madness
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from.—III. iv. 138.

4. When he does forget himself, he afterwards recognizes the fact and repents of it.

"Harassed from without, and distracted from within, is it wonderful, if during his endeavor to conceal his thoughts, he should betray inattention to those around him, incoherence of speech and manner? . . . Hamlet was fully sensible how strange those involuntary improprieties must appear to others; he was conscious he could not suppress them; he knew he was surrounded with spies; and was justly apprehensive, lest his suspicions or purposes should be discovered."—**Richardson*.

To prevent these consequences, and at the same time, to afford himself breathing time, he counterfeits insanity.

"He assumes madness as a means of concealing his actual disturbance of mind. His over-excitability may betray him; but if it be a received opinion that his mind is unhinged, such an excess of over-excitement will pass unobserved and unstudied."—†*Dowden*.

"The disguise which he had adopted was not accidentally chosen. The subtlety of his intellect directed him to that tone of wayward sarcasm in which, while he appeared to others to be merely wandering, the bitterness of his soul might be relieved by the utterance of 'wild and whirling words.' But even in this disguise, his intellectual supremacy is constantly manifested."—‡*Knight*.

* See footnote, p. 32.

† See footnote, p. 32.

‡ Knight, Charles, born at Windsor, England, 1791; died 1873. An English publisher and author.

Polonius

Polonius is a man who has grown gray in courts where he has imbibed many a lesson of servility, adulation, and worldly prudence. Of real wisdom he possesses not a trace, and he forfeits all claim to the respect which his age ought to gain for him, by his paltry cunning, garrulity, and overweening self-confidence.

He is, in fact, in his second childhood, or, as Rosencrantz says, "Happily he's the second time come" to his "swathing-clouts." All his actions betray his self-conceit, and he does not hesitate to proclaim his own high opinion of himself. He is confident he has found the cause of Hamlet's madness:

Hath there been such a time—I'd fain know that—,
That I have positively said, "'Tis so,"
When it proved otherwise?—II. ii. 154,

he asks the king, and when the king replies, "Not that I know," continues,

Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.—II. ii. 157.

And further he stakes his reputation as a statesman upon the truth of his statements,

If he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.—II. ii. 165.

There is nothing he cannot do, if we may believe him. He poses as a critic of literature and the drama, and says that in his younger days he "was accounted a good actor." It is even a matter for boasting with him that in his youth he "suffered much extremity for love; very near this," referring to Hamlet's apparent distraction.

Falling in love with the sound of his own voice, he speaks on every subject, delights in puns and "foolish figures," uses many words in which to clothe little matter, forgets in the middle what he was saying, and with a perversity as strange as it is true to nature, utters wise maxims and sins against them in the same breath, as when he says,

Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief.—II. ii. 90,

and then by his loquacity draws upon himself the Queen's rebuke, "More matter, with less art," and at another time elicits Hamlet's ejaculation, "These tedious old fools." His folly arises almost entirely from his self-conceit. He considers his strength lies in penetration, whereas he is in reality most easily deceived. Being filled with a most exalted notion of his own shrewdness, and feeling sure that Hamlet is mad, he fails to see that he himself is a laughing stock and the object of the Prince's pointed satire. His folly is apparent to others besides Hamlet; hence when the latter bids the Player "follow that lord," he warns him at the same time, "And look you mock him not." After Hamlet has slain Polonius in mistake for the king, and has discovered his error, he drags forth the corpse, and thus sums up his character in a few words,

Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.—III. iv. 204.

Polonius is just the man to suit the king. Faithful in service, not too scrupulous nor too penetrating, he is a most useful instrument in the hands of the greater villain, Claudius, who speaks of him to Laertes with gratitude,

The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.—I. ii. 47.

He serves his master with assiduity and officiousness, and declares,

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king.—II. ii. 44.

For him, to be deceitful is to be wise, and he takes it to be the mark of a courtier, "too much proved,"

that with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.—III. i. 47.

"For crooked ways, for side-thrusts, for eaves-dropping, he has an unwearied predilection, to which he is at length sacrificed." He sets a spy upon his son's actions in Paris, and believes "it is a fetch of warrant." He thinks that to use a "bait of falsehood" in order to take "a carp of truth" is a token "of wisdom and of reach." In the end he falls a victim to his meddlesomeness and taste for eaves-dropping:

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.—III. iv. 31.

As Goethe* says, he speaks like a book when he is prepared beforehand, and like an ass when he utters the overflowings of his heart. His parting speech to Laertes is full of worldly wisdom. As long as he confines himself to generalities his advice may be safely followed, but when he advises in particular instances, as in the case of Hamlet's relations with Ophelia, he generally overshoots the mark. Yet, even for his unwarranted suspicion, he has an excuse to offer in a maxim which sounds much like wisdom,

 beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.—II. i. 109.

* See footnote, p. 33.

As a father he has been something of a martinet, exacting ready obedience from both his children. He loves them, and is anxious that they should stand well with the world. Therefore, he has kept Ophelia apart from the demoralizing tendencies of the court, and he is solicitous that Laertes should commit no act in Paris by which his reputation might suffer. But his ideas of education are, to say the least, peculiar; immorality, gaming, drinking, or swearing are trifling offences in his opinion.

“Polonius is a perfect character in its kind; nor is there any foundation for the objections which have been made to the consistency of this part. It is said that he acts very foolishly and talks very sensibly. There is no inconsistency in that. Again, that he talks wisely at one time and foolishly at another, that his advice to Laertes is very excellent, and his advice to the King and Queen on the subject of Hamlet’s madness very ridiculous. But he gives the one as a father and is sincere in it; he gives the other as a mere courtier, a busy-body, and is accordingly officious, garrulous, and impertinent.”—**Hazlitt*.

“A maxim is a conclusion upon observation of matters of fact, and is merely retrospective . . . Polonius is a man of maxims. While he is descanting on matters of past experience, as in that excellent speech to Laertes before he sets out on his travels, he is admirable; but when he comes to advise or project, he is a mere dotard. . . . A man of maxims only is like a cyclop with one eye, and that eye placed in the back of his head.”—†*Coleridge*.

“Arrived at a ripe age, the schooled courtier lacks not experience and observation, which he has carefully gathered and loquaciously gives forth; the self-conceit of emptiness is apparent in him, and with the same self-sufficiency he gives good precepts to his son, a lesson on human nature to his servant, and counsels to his king.”—‡*Gervinus*.

* See footnote, p. 49.

† See footnote, p. 25.

‡ See footnote, p. 30.

“The shrewd, wary, subtle, pompous, garrulous old courtier.”—**Mrs. Jameson*.

Laertes

Laertes is an impetuous youth “of great showing,” “the card or calendar of the gentry,” a man of action, and the greatest possible contrast to Hamlet.

He is determined in the attainment of his object and unscrupulous as to the means he adopts to attain it. “By laboursome petition” he overbore his father’s reluctance to allow him to return to Paris, and “at last,” says Polonius, “Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.” He allows no obstacle to stand in the way of his revenge, and is willing even to cut the murderer’s throat “i’ the church.” He who is described as “the continent of what part a gentleman should be” is deterred by no scruples of conscience, no considerations of honor. ✓ He poisons the tip of the sword with which he is to “play” with Hamlet,

I’ll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.—IV. vii. 145.

Such is his determination that he can even exercise patience in the pursuit of his revenge. Having heard of his father’s death and his secret burial, he at once returns from France, but, being doubtful of the cause, and suspecting no one of foul play towards the old courtier, he “Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,” until suspicion is cast upon the King. Then he allows free play to his impetuosity,

The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O’erbears your officers.—IV. v. 85.

* See footnote, p. 31.

No dread of "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns" puzzles him. "To this point I stand," he says,

That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
Most thoroughly for my father.—IV. v. 117.

Not all the world shall stay him, and for his means, he'll husband them so well "They shall go far with little." At the sight of Ophelia's madness his frenzy is still further excited,

By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam.—IV. v. 139.

No wonder, then, that the King afterwards confided to his wife

How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again.—IV. vii. 191.

With characteristic impetuosity and violence he shows his grief on hearing of Ophelia's death. He does not, forever, with "veiled lids" seek for his father and his sister in the dust. Tears gush forth,

nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will.—IV. vii. 186.

When she is laid in her grave he leaps in after her to catch her once more in his arms, and his grief bears such an emphasis, says Hamlet, that it

Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers.—V. i. 279.

Rumors of his wildness must have reached the ears of Ophelia; otherwise the meek and gentle maiden could never have replied to his fraternal advice in this sharp and spirited speech,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,

Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.—I. iii. 47.

He has come from the gay city to see the coronation, and as soon as that is over he returns thither with all speed. His father, knowing him to be addicted to

such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty,—II. i. 22,

has, with reluctance, allowed him to return to Paris, but having given his permission, he sends Reynaldo there to spy upon his actions; so little confidence has the mistrustful father in the son's prudence and self-restraint.

“Laertes is the cultured young gentleman of the period. He is accomplished, chivalric, gallant, but the accomplishments are superficial, the chivalry theatrical, the gallantry of a showy kind. He is master of events up to a certain point, because he sees their coarse, gaudy, superficial significance. It is his part to do fine things and make fine speeches. . . .

“No overweight of thought, no susceptibility of conscience retard the action of the young gallant. He readily falls in with the king's scheme of assassination, and adds his private contribution of villainy—the venom on his rapier's point.”—

**Dowden.*

Contrast Between Laertes and Hamlet

Laertes is a man of action; Hamlet a speculative philosopher. Laertes takes no time for thought, but rushes impetuously toward his object; Hamlet is too much taken up with thought to allow of action. Laertes overcomes every obstacle and uses every opportunity; Hamlet has fewer obstacles to overcome and neglects them. Laertes sullies his knightly honor by poisoning his weapon; Hamlet is of a nature so free and generous that he

* See footnote, p. 32.

does not so much as "peruse the foils." With Hamlet revenge is a religious duty, a duty to his country, to his murdered father and to himself; with Laertes it is a matter of honor only. And what a contrast there was between the murdered fathers! the one,

A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal.

To give the world assurance of a man,—III. iv. 60,

the other, a "foolish prating knave," a ridiculous, tedious, prying, self-complacent sinner.

"Laertes is the opposite and the pendant to Hamlet. The position of both is nearly the same. Laertes, too, has to avenge the death of a father and sister. His soul, however, kindles at once with passionate ardor. Rejecting all deliberation, his resolutions burst forth at once into action, and it is with difficulty that the persuasive eloquence of the King succeeds in restoring him to self-possession, and the adoption of artifice and dissimulation."—**Ulrici*.

"Laertes, somewhat of a hero *a la mode*, a fencer, a knight of honor of the French school, of temperament as choleric as Hamlet's is melancholy, a man utterly unendowed with the splendid physical and mental gifts of Hamlet, flees from the distant Paris to Denmark to avenge the death of his father."—†*Gervinus*.

Ophelia

"Rose of May," "sweet maid," she possesses more of the qualities of the heart than of the head. Although she appears but rarely in the play, and though half the time she is "divided from herself and her fair judgment," "Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts," yet her influence is felt throughout the play, and her purity and innocence afford relief and repose amidst the worldliness, the mystery, and the dissimulation which characterize most of the other personages of the drama.

* See footnote, p. 30.

† See footnote, p. 30.

Unlike her father and her brother, she possesses no knowledge of the world or of its wickedness, and she remains untouched by the vitiating influences of court life, "Unsifted in such perilous circumstance;" and hence, when she falls in love with Hamlet and he with her, she devotes herself, heart and soul, to him, and, until restrained by the influence of her father and her brother, has of her "audience been most free and bounteous." Her innocent mind contains no secrets, and she answers readily every question put to her on the subject of her lover.

We must not suppose that Hamlet's strictures on women, III. i., are addressed specially to Ophelia, or that they imply any stain on the virtue or honesty of the docile maid. His upbraidings are directed against the sex in general, and are inspired most probably by the recent conduct of his own mother. It is more than possible, also, that Ophelia acts her part so poorly that Hamlet is able to see from her gestures and behavior that the meeting is being watched. His one anxiety appears to be that her innocence and purity may remain unspotted while in contact with the world, and hence he urges her, "Get thee to a nunnery. . . . We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery."

Frivolous and shallow though he be, Laertes can yet appreciate and reverence the beauty and purity, of his sister's brief life. "Lay her i' the earth," he commands the priest,

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.—V. i. 262.

Ophelia's one fault of character is excessive docility. She listens meekly to her brother's precepts, and promises,

I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart.—I. iii. 45;

and in all things she obeys her father, in opposition to the promptings of her own heart. She shows him the letters that are

in her keeping, and by his command denies all further interviews to Hamlet. She even allows herself to be used as a snare whereby the Prince's secrets may be discovered, and offers no protest when Polonius bids her play the part of a dissembler, reading on a book,

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.—III. i. 45.

Her love for Hamlet is stronger than her discretion. Although she never declares her love in words, yet we know her heart is given entirely to him. We can believe that "she would hang on him,"

As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on.—I. ii. 144.

We know she "suck'd the honey of his music vows," and that his loss makes her "of ladies most deject and wretched." And yet we imagine her love is not such that Hamlet can derive strength from it, or that it can enable her to understand him. The Queen hopes in vain that her virtues "Will bring him to his wonted way again," to the honor of them both. She was born to live in an atmosphere of calm and comfort, not to strive with the conflicting forces of the world.

"The Margaret of Goethe* and Ophelia of Shakespeare had perforce to yield mutely to fate, for they were so feeble that each gesture they witnessed seemed fate's own gesture to them. But yet, had they only possessed some fragment of Antigone's strength—the Antigone of Sophocles—would they not then have transformed the desires of Hamlet and Faust as well as their own?"—†*Maeterlinck*.

Unlike the apparently random utterances of Hamlet, whose speech "was not like madness" but had method in it, Ophelia's "speech is nothing," or carries "but half-sense." She alternates between laughter and tears, and in her thoughts, flowers and prettiness are strangely intermingled with the wickedness

* See footnote, p. 33.

† See footnote, p. 43.

of the world's ways. Her conversation about her father is "interlarded with sweet songs." She becomes a mere picture, "incapable of her own distress," but in her ruin, beautiful still as ever,

Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.—IV. v. 171.

As Mrs. Jameson* has said: "It is not the suspension, but the utter destruction of the reasoning powers; it is the total imbecility which, as medical people well know, frequently follows some terrible shock to the spirits. Constance is frantic; Lear is mad; Ophelia is insane. Her sweet mind lies in fragments before us—a pitiful spectacle! . . . It belonged to Shakespeare alone so to temper such a picture that we can endure to dwell upon it.

"Ophelia—poor Ophelia! Oh, far too soft, too good, too fair, to be cast among the briers of this working-day world, and fall and bleed upon the thorns of life! What should be said of her? for eloquence is mute before her! Like a strain of sad, sweet music, which comes floating by us on the wings of night and silence, and which we rather feel than hear—like the exhalation of the violet, dying even upon the sense it charms—like the snowflake, dissolved in air before it has caught a stain of earth—like the light surf severed from the billow, which a breath disperses; such is the character of Ophelia."

Horatio

Horatio, in contrast to all the other characters of the play, is the representative of common-sense and honesty. He is the one man upon whose judgment Hamlet can rely when all others fail him. He alone affords a happy contradiction to the Player's general statement,

The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.—III. ii. 202.

* See footnote, p. 31.

Perfect calmness of mind and equability of temperament are his chief characteristics. He is nothing in extremes. A scholar, but not a pedant; he is skeptical, but open to conviction; though not essentially a man of action, as Fortinbras is, he is able to bear his part in the action of the world. He is great in his power of endurance, for he has been—

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blessed are those,
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.—III. ii. 72.

Hamlet confides in his discretion, and relies upon his calmness and absence of bias to observe the King's demeanor during the acting of the play. Horatio resembles Hamlet in his hatred of all that is shallow, affected, or false, and takes no trouble to conceal his contempt for the "lapwing" Osric. He is the soul of honor, but holds in no esteem the world's false notions of honor. Therefore, he begs of Hamlet to postpone his fencing bout with Laertes, because he sees that the mind of his friend is not attuned to such a contest, and because he discerns disaster in the issue. Being "more an antique Roman than a Dane," he possesses the firmness of heart, and carelessness about his own life, of a Brutus or a Cato, and would have emulated their example and died with his friend had not Hamlet reminded him that there remained for him a duty yet to be performed.

He is the only man of all those by whom Hamlet is surrounded who seeks no material advantage for himself. He possesses the entire confidence of the prince, and into his bosom Hamlet unburdens himself of "the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce." From Horatio, Hamlet derives the support he needs to preserve what balance of mind he still retains; to him he communicates his suspicions, his griefs, and his designs; without Horatio's

sympathy, Hamlet would have fallen into a condition of permanent despair and pessimism, from which no effort could have aroused him. And Horatio loved Hamlet as he loved his own life; he alone was fully conscious of the true nobility of the prince's character, and therefore the poet has appropriately given it to him to speak those words of praise over his dead body,

Now cracks a noble heart:—good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!—V. ii. 377.

“The qualities that distinguish Horatio, and render him worthy of the esteem of Hamlet, are not affluence, nor pageantry, nor gay accomplishments, nor vivacity, nor even wit, and uncommon genius, too often allied to an impetuous temper: he is distinguished by that equanimity and independence of soul which arise from governed and corrected passions, from a sound and discerning judgment.”—**Richardson*.

“Horatio's equanimity, his evenness of temper, is like solid land to Hamlet, after the tossings and tumult of his own heart.”—†*Dowden*.

Fortinbras

Fortinbras, the nephew of the King of Norway, a prince, “delicate and tender,” but spirited and ambitious, forms a contrast to both Hamlet and Horatio. He is a man of action, and is never happy unless engaged in “some enterprise that hath a stomach in it.” Being, as Horatio says, “Of unimprovèd metal hot and full,” he engages in martial enterprises merely for the sake of fighting. He furnishes Hamlet an example which he is quick to admire, but powerless to follow. “Examples gross as earth, exhort me,” says Hamlet,

Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;

* See footnote, p. 32.

† See footnote, p. 32.

Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell.—IV. iv. 46.

He is obedient to his uncle, the King of Norway, who, appreciating his spirit of adventure, pardons his indiscretion and furnishes him with assistance that he may satisfy his craving for action. As he is single-minded and keeps the end to be attained ever in view, he is successful.

He returns victorious from his expedition against Poland, an expedition "That hath in it no profit but the name," and receives Hamlet's dying voice for his election to the sovereignty of Denmark. The sound of war is music to him, scenes of death a "feast." "Such a sight as this," he says, referring to the scene of carnage with which the play concludes, "Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss." He grieves over the series of disasters that has made his own fortunes, and pays a soldier's tribute to Hamlet,

Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally.—V. ii. 413.

"With none of the rare qualities of the Danish Prince, he excels him in plain grasp of ordinary fact. Shakespeare knows that the success of these men who are limited, definite, positive, will do no dishonor to the failure of the rarer natures to whom the problem of living is more embarrassing, and for whom the tests of the world are stricter and more delicate."—*Dowden*.

Osric

Osric is a representative of the showy and fashionable courtier of Elizabeth's reign, rather than a type of Danish society. His wealth and territorial possessions secure him a position at court,—“he hath much land, and fertile”—his slender intel-

* See footnote, p. 32.

lectual equipment leads him to ape the latest fashion set by a few brilliant spirits, scholars, and litterati (Lyly and his fellow-Euphuists); but, like all imitators and converts, he goes farther than his models, whose purpose he misunderstands. He mistakes extravagance and absurdity of diction for wit, ridiculous formality for true politeness and courtliness, and affectation for originality:

Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed 'opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.—V. ii. 198.

He is superficial and shallow, forward and insincere. He either fails to see or pretends not to see that he is a mark for the contempt of Horatio and a butt for the satire and mimicry of Hamlet. From the dying words of Laertes we may infer that Osric was a party to the final treachery against Hamlet,

Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly killed with mine own treachery.—V. ii. 326,

a confession he receives without betraying any mark of astonishment.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern had been fellow-students of Hamlet at Wittenberg, and were much beloved by him. "Good gentlemen," says the Queen,

he hath much talk'd of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres.—II. ii. 19.

They are received with cordiality by the Prince, and are entertained without reserve until he perceives they have been corrupted by the King. They are typical of men whose inclinations are good, but who lack character to follow their own inclina-

tions. They cannot even practice villainy with success. "You were sent for," says Hamlet, "and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour." They commit no actual crime in the play, and are apparently no worse than the society in which they move. Hamlet tells Rosencrantz that he "soaks up"

the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities; he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again, IV. ii. 17.

They are fools more than they are knaves, but Shakespeare knows that folly is often more harmful than knavery. When death is meted out to them as a punishment for their base servility, Hamlet satisfies himself with the reflection,

Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow.—V. ii. 57.

He feels no compunction at their fate, and though their punishment is severe, they leave the world no poorer for their loss.

"Wilhelm Meister translates Hamlet and adapts it for the stage; a difficulty arises in finding characters to fill all the parts, and Serlo, the stage manager, suggests that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern should be compressed into one. 'Heaven preserve me from all such curtailments!' answered Wilhelm, 'they destroy at once the sense and the effect. What these two persons are and do, it is impossible to represent by one. In such small matters, we discover Shakespeare's greatness. These soft approaches, this smirking and bowing, this assenting, wheedling, flattering, this whisking agility, this wagging of the tail, this allness and emptiness, this legal knavery, this ineptitude and insipidity,—how can they be expressed by a single man? There ought to be at least a dozen of these people, if they could be had: for it is only in society that they are anything; they are

society itself, and Shakespeare showed no little wisdom and discernment in bringing in a pair of them.' ''—*Goethe.

The Gravediggers

The Gravediggers are characters interesting from many viewpoints. They represent the lower stratum of society and so they help to complete the picture of social conditions as presented in the play. They afford relief from the excitement and tension of preceding scenes. They belong to the type of workmen with which we are familiar at the present day. They sing and dally over their work, they argue with each other and discuss topics which they cannot comprehend, but nevertheless with a considerable amount of common-sense. They are tinged with socialism and are at enmity with the privileged class. They freely express their views on the legality of Ophelia's burial in sanctified ground. Hamlet remarks of them, "By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe." The First Clown seeks to show his cleverness and ingenuity in words—"How absolute the knave is!" says Hamlet. The gravedigger reasons and philosophizes with Hamlet, the prince of philosophers.

The Ghost

· I am thy father's spirit.—I. v. 9.

"The awful horror excited by the foregoing passage is accomplished by simplicity of expression, and by the uncertainty of the thing described. The description is indirect, and by exhibiting a picture of the effects which an actual view of the real object would necessarily produce in the spectator, it affects us more strongly than by a positive enumeration of the most dreadful circumstances. The imagination left to her own inventions, overwhelmed with obscurity, travels far into the regions of

* See footnote, p. 33.

terror, into the abysses of fiery and unfathomable darkness.”—
**Richardson*.

XII. ABSTRACT OF THE PLAY

ACT I

The king of Denmark dies suddenly at the royal castle of Kronborg, at Elsinore, and almost immediately his widow, Gertrude, marries the king's brother, Claudius. This hasty and unnatural marriage begets a suspicion in the mind of her son, Hamlet, that his father, the king, has been the victim of foul play. One night, shortly after the king's burial, the sentinels at the royal castle are frightened by the appearance of a ghost, which strongly resembles the dead king. They inform Hamlet, who accompanies them on the next night's watch, encounters the ghost, and learns from it that Claudius, the usurper, had poisoned the king while he slept, and had circulated the report that he had been stung by a serpent. Hamlet swears vengeance against Claudius and the ghost vanishes.

ACT II

That he may the more easily carry out his designs, Hamlet feigns madness. His assumed madness shows itself first in connection with Ophelia, with whom he is in love. He treats her rudely, writes her rambling, meaningless letters, and perplexes her with wild, incoherent conversation. A company of strolling players visit the palace, and Hamlet suggests that they produce a play before the court, through which he hopes to confirm his suspicions of Claudius' guilt.

ACT III

The play portrays the murder of a Venetian duke, and the subsequent precipitate marriage of the murderer and his victim's widow. The story closely resembles the case of Claudius

* See footnote, p. 32.

and Gertrude. During the progress of the play Hamlet watches intently the effect on Claudius. As Hamlet had suspected, Claudius sees the portrayal of his own crime under different form, and hurriedly leaves the company. Hamlet is now thoroughly convinced of the usurper's guilt, and renews his resolve to wreak vengeance on him. Gertrude also is much agitated by the purport of the play, and sends for Hamlet that she may reproach him with having offended the king. Hamlet replies in scathing, yet respectful, terms, and convinces his mother that his father met his death at the hands of Claudius. During this interview Hamlet kills Polonius (a courtier), father of Ophelia, whom he detects playing the part of a spy.

ACT IV

Claudius decides that Hamlet must leave the country, and he directs Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, school companions of Hamlet, to accompany the prince to England. He gives them a letter to the English king, which letter, while pretending to be in the interest of Hamlet's health, contains secret orders for his immediate death.

On the voyage Hamlet learns the contents of the letter, and substitutes one of his own which orders the immediate execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern on their arrival in England. Shortly after this, Hamlet's boat is attacked by pirates, and in the conflict Hamlet boards the pirates' ship and is carried back to Denmark, while Rosencrantz and Guildenstern escape and proceed to their doom. Hamlet returns to Elsinore just in time for the funeral of Ophelia, who, driven insane by grief over the madness of her lover, and the death of her father, had drowned herself.

ACT V

In a paroxysm of grief, Hamlet disputes Laertes' position as chief mourner and a quarrel ensues. Laertes blames Hamlet

for the death of Ophelia, and the murder of his father, Polonius, and tries to kill him.

Claudius takes advantage of this feud to accomplish the death of Hamlet. He advises Laertes to challenge Hamlet to a pretended friendly bout at fencing, and by apparent accident, to stab him to death. Laertes accepts the king's suggestion and adds to the treachery by putting poison on the point of his sword. To make doubly sure of Hamlet's death Claudius has poisoned wine placed near Hamlet so that in the heat of the conflict he will drink it. At the outset of the contest Hamlet shows greater skill than does Laertes, and the queen in toasting him, by mistake drinks the poisoned cup. Laertes wounds Hamlet, but in doing so loses his sword. In the ensuing scuffle weapons are exchanged and Hamlet wounds Laertes with his own poison-tipped foil. The queen dies from the effects of the poisoned wine. Laertes, in dying, confesses the plot against Hamlet; Hamlet stabs the king to death, and then dies himself.

XIII. DURATION OF THE PLAY

Day 1.—Act I., Sc. i., ii., iii.

Day 2.—Act I., Sc. iv., v.

There is a considerable interval between Acts I. and II., which has been put down as two months for (1) Hamlet speaks of his father "*But two months dead,*" I. ii. 138, whilst Ophelia says, "*Nay, 'tis twice two months,*" III. ii. 129. This gives an interval of at least two months.

Such an interval would give time:

1. For money to be sent to Laertes. "*Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo,*" II. i. 1.
2. The return of the Ambassadors from Norway.

Their departure is mentioned, I. ii. 33-34, and their return, II. ii. 40-41.

Day 3.—Act II., Sc. i., ii.

Day 4.—Act III., Sc. i., ii., iii., iv. Act IV., Sc. i., ii., iii.

Day 5.—Act IV., Sc. iv.

An interval which it is impossible to estimate. Shakespeare seems to have overlooked the fact that Hamlet's sudden return is irreconcilable with the return of the Ambassadors from England the day after his own return.

We have:

1. The return of Hamlet, "*sudden and more strange*," for which a week is sufficient if not, indeed, too long. He had sailed two days on the voyage to England and returned immediately and unexpectedly.
2. The return of the Ambassadors from England. They had set out with Hamlet, and had gone to England. Yet they return the day after Hamlet's arrival.
3. The return of Laertes from Paris.
4. The return of Fortinbras. We must assign sufficient time for him to have marched to Poland, to have won his victory, and to have returned.

Clearly the sudden return of Hamlet cannot be fitted in with the time required by Laertes, the Ambassadors, and Fortinbras.

Critics differ from the space of a week to the extent of two months.

Day 6.—Act IV., Sc. v., vi., vii.

Day 7.—Act V., Sc. i., ii.

Seasons.—The opening scene cannot have been later than March.

" 'Tis bitter cold," I. i. 8.

The flowers gathered by Ophelia must have been plucked late in May or early in June. This incident gives the time of the later scenes.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

Dramatis Personæ.

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark.*

HAMLET, *Son to the former King,
and Nephew to the present.*

HORATIO, *Friend of Hamlet.*

OLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*

LAERTES, *his Son.*

VOLTIMAND,
CORNELIUS,
ROSENCRANTZ,
GUILDENSTERN,
OSRIC.

} *Courtiers.*

MARCELLUS,
BERNARDO.

} *Officers.*

FRANCISCO, *a Soldier.*

REYNALDO, *Servant to Polonius.*

A Captain.

Ambassadors.

Ghost of Hamlet's Father.

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway.*

Two Clowns, *Gravediggers.*

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark and
Mother to Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polonius.*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers,
Players, Sailors, Messengers,
and Attendants.

SCENE: *Elsinore.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter BERNARDO.

Bernardo. Who's there?

Francisco. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Bernardo. Long live the king!

Francisco. Bernardo?

Bernardo. He.

Francisco. You come most carefully¹ upon your hour.

Bernardo. 'Tis now struck² twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Francisco. For this relief much³ thanks: 'tis bitter cold,

And I am sick at heart.

Bernardo. Have you had quiet⁴ guard?

¹punctually

²an anachronism

³many

⁴undisturbed

Francisco. Not a mouse stirring. 10

Bernardo. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The *rivals*¹ of my watch, bid them make haste.

Francisco. I think I hear them.—Stand, ho!
Who is there?

¹*associates*

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Horatio. Friends to this *ground*².

²*country*

Marcellus. And liegemen to the Dane.

Francisco. Give you good night.

Marcellus. O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath relieved you?

Francisco. Bernardo hath my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit.*

Marcellus. Holla! Bernardo!

Bernardo. Say, what, is Horatio there?

Horatio. A piece of him.

Bernardo. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good

Marcellus.

20

Marcellus. What, has this thing appear'd
again to-night?

Bernardo. I have seen nothing.

Marcellus. Horatio says 'tis but our *fantasy*,³
And will not let belief take hold of him

³*imagination*

Touching this *dreaded*⁴ sight, twice seen *of*⁵ us:

⁴*dreadful*

Therefore I have entreated him along

⁵*by*

With us to watch the minutes of this night,

That if again this apparition come,

He may *approve*⁶ our eyes and speak to it.

⁶*prove, verify*

Horatio. Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

Bernardo. Sit down awhile; 30

And let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story,

What we have two nights seen.

Horatio. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Bernardo. Last night of all,

When yond same star that's westward from the
pole

Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then *beating*¹ one——

Marcellus. Peace, break thee off;—look,
where it comes again!

¹*striking*

40

Enter Ghost.

Bernardo. In the same figure, like the king
that's dead.

Marcellus. Thou art a scholar; speak to it,
Horatio.

Bernardo. Looks it not like the king? mark
it, Horatio.

Horatio. Most like: it harrows me with fear
and wonder.

Bernardo. It would be *spoke*² to.

Marcellus. Question it, Horatio.

²*spoken*

Horatio. What art thou, that usurp'st this
time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form

In which the majesty of buried *Denmark*³

Did *sometimes*⁴ march? by heaven, I charge thee,
speak!

³*king of*
⁴*formerly*

Marcellus. It is offended.

Bernardo. See, it stalks away.

50

Horatio. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee,
speak! [*Exit Ghost.*

Marcellus. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Bernardo. How now, Horatio! you tremble,
and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you *on't*?⁵

⁵*of it*

Horatio. Before my God, I *might*⁶ not this
believe

⁶*could*

Without the sensible and true *avouch*⁷

⁷*warrant*

Of mine own eyes.

Marcellus. Is it not like the king?

Horatio. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on

60

When he the ambitious *Norway*⁸ combated;

⁸*king of*

So frowned he once, when, in an angry *parle*,¹
He smote the sledded Polack on the ice.

'Tis strange.

Marcellus. Thus twice before, and *jump*² at
this dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Horatio. In what particular thought to work
I know not;

But, in the *gross and scope*³ of my opinion,

This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Marcellus. Good now, sit down, and tell me,
he that knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,

And why such daily *cast*⁴ of brazen cannon,

And foreign *mart*⁵ for implements of war;

Why such *impress*⁶ of shipwrights, whose *sore*
task

Does not *divide*⁷ the Sunday from the week;

What might be *toward*,⁸ that this sweaty haste

Doth make the night joint-labourer with the
day:

Who is't that can inform me?

Horatio. That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,

Whose image even but now appear'd to us,

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,

Thereto spurr'd on by a most *emulate*⁹ pride,

*Dared*¹⁰ to the combat; in which our valiant

Hamlet—

For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd com-
pact,

Well ratified by law and heraldry,

Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands

Which he stood *seized of*,¹¹ to the conqueror:

Against the which, a *moiety competent*¹²

Was *gaged*¹³ by our king; which *had*¹⁴ returned

To the inheritance of Fortinbras,

¹*parley*

²*just*

³*general range*

⁴*casting*

⁵*market*

⁶*pressed into
service*

⁷*distinguish*

⁸*near at hand*

⁹*envious*

¹⁰*challenged*

¹¹*possessed of*

¹²*sufficient por-
tion*

¹³*pledged*

¹⁴*would have*

Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant

And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimprovèd *metal*¹ hot and full,
Hath in the *skirts*² of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a *list*³ of lawless *resolutes*,⁴
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a *stomach*⁵ in't: which is no other 100
—As it doth well appear unto our state—
*But*⁶ to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and *romage*⁷ in the land.

Bernardo. I think it be no other *but*⁸ e'en so:
Well may it *sort*,⁹ that this portentous figure
Comes armèd through our watch, so like the
king 110

That was, and is, the *question*¹⁰ of these wars.

Horatio. A *mote*¹¹ it is to trouble the mind's
eye.

In the most high and *palmy*¹² state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted
dead

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As¹³ stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the *moist star*,¹⁴
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire *stands*,¹⁵
Was sick almost to *doomsday*¹⁶ with eclipse: 120
And even the like *precursor*¹⁷ of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding *still*¹⁸ the fates,
And prologue to the *omen*¹⁹ coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.

¹mettle, courage

²borders

³muster roll

⁴filibusters

⁵stubborn
courage

⁶than

⁷stir

⁸than

⁹accord

¹⁰cause

¹¹an atom

¹²prosperous

¹³namely

¹⁴the moon

¹⁵depends

¹⁶death

¹⁷forewarning

¹⁸constantly

¹⁹calamity

Re-enter Ghost.

But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done, 130
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, *happily*,¹ *foreknowing*² may avoid,
O, speak!

Or if thou hast up-hoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in
death,

[*Cock crows.*

Speak of it: stay, and speak!—Stop it, Mar-
cellus.

Marcellus. Shall I strike at it with my
partisan?³ 140

Horatio. Do, if it will not stand.

Bernardo. 'Tis here!

Horatio. 'Tis here! [*Exit Ghost.*

Marcellus. 'Tis gone!

We do it wrong, being so *majestical*,⁴

To offer it the show of violence;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,

And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Bernardo. It was about to speak, when the
cock crew.

Horatio. And then it started like a guilty
thing

Upon a fearful summons. I have heard, 150
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,

The *extravagant*⁵ and *erring*⁶ spirit hies

To his *confine*.⁷ and of the truth herein

This present object made *probation*.⁸

¹*haply*

²*foreknowledge*

³*weapon*

⁴*majestic*

⁵*roving*

⁶*wandering*

⁷*abode*

⁸*proof*

Marcellus. It faded on the crowing of the cock.

Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This *bird of dawning*¹ singeth all night long: 160 ¹*cock*
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets
strike,

No fairy *takes*,² nor witch hath power to charm, ²*bewitches*
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Horatio. So have I heard, and do in part
believe it.

But look, the morn, in *russet*³ mantle clad, ³*reddish*
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life, 170
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Marcellus. Let's do't, I pray; and I this
morning know

Where we shall find him most conveniently.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Room of State in the Castle.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS,
LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords,
and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear
brother's death

The memory be green,⁴ and that it us befitted ⁴*fresh in our
memory*
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole king-
dom

To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our *sometime*¹ sister, now our queen,
The imperial *jointress*² of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a *defeated*³ joy,—
With one *auspicious*,⁴ and one *dropping*⁵ eye,
With mirth in funeral, and with *dirge*⁶ in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and *dole*,⁷—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein *barred*⁸
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, *that you know*,⁹ young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak *supposal*¹⁰ of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be *disjoint*¹¹ and out of frame,
*Colleguèd with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to *pester*¹² us with message,
*Importing*¹³ the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.

Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting:
Thus much the business is: we have here *writ*¹⁴
To *Norway*,¹⁵ uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, *impotent*¹⁶ and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further *gait*¹⁷ herein: *in that*¹⁸ the levies,
The lists, and full *proportions*¹⁹, are all made
Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To²⁰ business with the king, more than the scope
Of these *dilated*²¹ articles allow.

Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.
Cornelius. } In that and all things will we
Voltimand. } show our duty.
King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

- 10 ¹former
²joint possessor
³marred
⁴happy looking
⁵shedding tears
⁶lamentation
⁷grief
⁸excluded
- 20 ⁹already
¹⁰estimate
¹¹disjointed
¹²annoy
¹³referring to
- 30 ¹⁴written
¹⁵king of
¹⁶invalid
¹⁷progress
¹⁸inasmuch as
¹⁹contingents
- 40 ²⁰for
²¹fully expressed

* Co-operated with the idle fancy he entertained of turning the occasion to his advantage.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
 You told us of some *suit*;¹ what is't, Laertes?
 *You cannot speak of reason to the *Dane*,²
 And *lose your voice*:³ what wouldst thou beg,
 Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
 The head is not more *native to*⁴ the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laertes. My dread lord, 50
 Your leave and favour to return to France;
 From whence though willingly I came to Den-
 mark,

To show my duty in your coronation;
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward
 France,

And *bow them to*⁵ your gracious leave and
pardon.⁶

King. Have you your father's leave? What
 says Polonius?

Polonius. He hath, my lord, wrung from
 me my *slow*⁷ leave

By *laboursome*⁸ petition, and at last 60
 Upon his will I sealed my *hard*⁹ consent:
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be
 thine,

And thy best graces spend it at thy will!

But now, my *cousin*¹⁰ Hamlet, and my son,—

Hamlet. [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and
 less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on
 you?

Hamlet. Not so, my lord; I am too much i'
 the sun.

¹*request*

²*king of
Denmark*

³*ask in vain*

⁴*connected with*

⁵*solicit*

⁶*permission*

⁷*reluctant*

⁸*laborious*
⁹*obtained with
difficulty*

¹⁰see Note I. ii.
64

* Speak of any reasonable request to the King of Denmark.

A fault against the dead, a fault *to*¹ nature,
 To reason most absurd; whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who *still*² hath cried,
 From the first corse till he that died to-day,
 "This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
 This *unprevailing*³ woe; and think of us
 As of a father: for let the world take note,
 You are the *most immediate*⁴ to our throne;
 And with no less *nobility of*⁵ love 110
 Than that which *dearest*⁶ father bears his son,
 Do I impart toward you. *For*⁷ your intent
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most *retrograde to*⁸ our desire:
 And we beseech you, *bend you*⁹ to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet:

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

Hamlet. I *shall*¹⁰ in all my best obey you,
 madam. 120

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
 Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
 This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling *to*¹¹ my heart: in grace whereof,
 No jocund health that *Denmark*¹² drinks to-day,
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 And the king's *rouse*¹³ the heavens shall *bruit*¹⁴
 again,

*Re-speaking*¹⁵ earthly thunder.—Come away.

[*Exeunt all except HAMLET.*

Hamlet. O, that this too too solid flesh would
 melt,

Thaw, and *resolve*¹⁶ itself into a dew! 130
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His *canon*¹⁷ 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O
 God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the *uses*¹⁸ of this world!
 Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,

¹against

²always

³unavailing

⁴next heir

⁵ennobling

⁶fondest

⁷as regards

⁸opposed to

⁹try to induce
you

¹⁰will

¹¹near

¹²king o

¹³a bumper

¹⁴report loudly

¹⁵echoing

¹⁶melt away

¹⁷law, rule

¹⁸customs

That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature

Possess it *merely*.¹ That it should come to this!
But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two:

¹*absolutely*

So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion *to*² a satyr: so loving to my mother, 140
That he *might*³ not *beteem*⁴ the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on't,—Frailty, thy name is woman!—)

²*compared to*

³*could*

⁴*permit*

A *little*⁵ month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason, 150
Would have mourn'd longer,—married with mine uncle,

⁵*short*

My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules: within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most *unrighteous*⁶ tears
Had left the flushing in her *galled*⁷ eyes,
She married:—O, most wicked speed!
It is not, *nor*⁸ it *cannot*⁸ come to good:
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

⁶*insincere*

⁷*sore*

⁸*double negative*

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

Horatio. Hail to your lordship!

Hamlet. I am glad to see you well:

Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

160

Horatio. The same, my lord, and your *poor*⁹
servant ever.

⁹*humble*

Hamlet. Sir, my good friend; I'll *change*¹⁰
that name with you:

¹⁰*exchange*

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—*
Marcellus?

* What are you doing away from Wittenberg?

Marcellus. My good lord,—

Hamlet. I am very glad to see you. [*To Ber.*] Good even, sir.—

But what, in faith, *make*¹ you from Wittenberg?

Horatio. A truant disposition, *good my lord.*²

Hamlet. I would not hear your enemy say so,
Nor shall you do mine ear *that*³ violence 170

To make it *truster*⁴ of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Horatio. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Hamlet. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Horatio. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd *hard upon.*⁵

Hamlet. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked-meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables. 180

Would I had met my *dearest*⁶ foe in heaven

*Ere*⁷ I had ever seen that *day,*⁸ Horatio!—

My father!—methinks I see my father.

Horatio. Where, my lord?

Hamlet. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Horatio. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Hamlet. He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

Horatio. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Hamlet. Saw *who?*⁹

Horatio. My lord, the king your father.

Hamlet. The king my father! 190

Horatio. *Season*¹⁰ your *admiration*¹¹ for a while

¹*do*

²*my good lord*

³*such*

⁴*believer*

⁵*close after*

⁶*most bitter*

⁷*before*

⁸*marriage day*

⁹*whom*

¹⁰*qualify,*
control
¹¹*wonder*

With an *attent*¹ ear, till I *may deliver*,²
 Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
 This marvel to you.

Hamlet. For God's love, let me hear.

Horatio. Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
 In the dead *vast*³ and middle of the night,
 Been thus *encounter'd*.⁴ A figure like your father,

Armed *at point exactly, cap-a-pe*,⁵
 Appears before them, and with solemn march 200
 Goes *slow*⁶ and stately by them: thrice he walk'd

By their oppress'd and fear-surprisèd eyes,
 Within his truncheon's length; whilst they,
*distill'd*⁷

Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
 Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
 In *dreadful*⁸ secrecy impart they did;
 And I with them the third night kept the watch:
 Where, as they had *delivered*,⁹ both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,

The apparition comes: I knew your father; 210
 These hands are not more like.

Hamlet. But where was this?

Marcellus. My lord, upon the platform
 where we watch'd.

Hamlet. Did you not speak to it?

Horatio. My lord, I did,

But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
 It lifted up its head and did address
 Itself to motion, like *as*¹⁰ it would speak:
 But, *even then*,¹¹ the morning cock crew loud;
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanished from our sight.

Hamlet. 'Tis very strange.

Horatio. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true; 220

¹attentive

²can relate

³vastness

⁴met

⁵at all points
from head to
foot

⁶slowly

⁷melted

⁸awestruck

⁹related

¹⁰as if

¹¹just then

And we did think it *writ*¹ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Hamlet. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.

Hold you the watch to-night?

Marcellus. } We do, my lord.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. Armed, say you?

Marcellus. } Armed, my lord.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. From top to toe?

Marcellus. } My lord, from head to foot.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. Then saw you not his face?

Horatio. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Hamlet. What, look'd he frowningly? 230

Horatio. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.

Hamlet. Pale, or red?

Horatio. Nay, very pale.

Hamlet. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Horatio. Most *constantly*.² 2steadily

Hamlet. I would I had been there.

Horatio. It would have much amazed you.

Hamlet. Very *like*.³ 3likely

Very like. Stay'd it long?

Horatio. While one with moderate haste
might *tell*⁴ a hundred. 4count

Marcellus. } Longer, longer.
Bernardo. }

Horatio. Not when I saw it.

Hamlet. His beard was *grizzled*?⁵ no? 5gray

Horatio. It was, as I have seen it in his life, 240
A sable silver'd.

Hamlet. I will watch to-night;

Perchance 'twill walk again.

Horatio. I warrant it will.

Hamlet. If it assume my noble father's
person,

¹written

²steadily

³likely

⁴count

⁵gray

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
 And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
 If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
 Let it be *tenable*¹ in your silence still,
 And whatsoever else shall *hap*² to-night,
 Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
 I will requite your loves. So, fare you well: 250
 Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
 I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Hamlet. Your loves, as mine to you: fare-
 well.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.]

My father's *spirit*³ in arms! all is not well;
 I *doubt*⁴ some *foul play*;⁵ would the night were
 come!

Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's
 eyes.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in POLONIUS' House.

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laertes. My necessities are embark'd: fare-
 well:

And, sister, *as*⁶ the winds give benefit,
 And *convoy*⁷ is assistant, do not sleep,
 But let me hear from you.

Ophelia. Do you doubt that?

Laertes. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his
 favor,

Hold it *a fashion*,⁸ and a *toy in blood*;⁹
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,
 Forward, not permanent, *sweet*,¹⁰ not lasting,
 The perfume and *suppliance*¹¹ of a minute;
 No more.

Ophelia. No more but so?

Laertes. Think it no more: 10

For nature, *crescent*,¹² does not grow alone

¹*kept secret*

²*happen*

³*one syllable*

⁴*suspect*

⁵*treachery*

⁶*according as*

⁷*means of con-
veyance*

⁸*changeable*

⁹*fancy*

¹⁰*two syllables*

¹¹*to fill a place*

¹²*growing*

In thews and bulk; but as this *temple*¹ waxes,
 The inward service of the mind and soul
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now;
 And now no *soil*² nor *cautel*³ doth *besmirch*⁴
 The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
 For he himself is subject to his birth:
 He may not, as *unvalued*⁵ persons do,
*Carve*⁶ for himself; for on his choice depends
 The *safety*⁷ and health of this whole state;
 And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body
 Whereof *he is the head*.⁸ Then if he says he loves
 you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
 As he in his particular act and place
 *May give his saying deed; which is no further
 Than the *main voice*⁹ of Denmark goes withal.
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too *credent*¹⁰ ear you *list*¹¹ his songs,
 Or lose your heart
 To his *unmaster'd*¹² importunity.
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 †And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The *chariest*¹³ maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes;
 The *canker*¹⁴ galls the infants of the spring,
 Too oft before their *buttons*¹⁵ be *disclosed*;¹⁶
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious *blastments*¹⁷ are most imminent.
 Be wary, then; *best*¹⁸ safety lies in fear:
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else *near*.¹⁹

Ophelia. I shall²⁰ the *effect*²¹ of this good lesson
 keep,
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my
 brother,

¹body²stain³deceit⁴defile⁵of no worth⁶choose⁷three syllables⁸pronounced
as if written
he's th' head⁹public opinion¹⁰believing¹¹listen to¹²unbridled¹³most heedful¹⁴worm that
preys upon
blossoms¹⁵buds¹⁶unfolded¹⁷blights¹⁸(the) best¹⁹(be) near²⁰will²¹th' effect

* Is able to carry his words into effect.

† "Do not advance as far as your affection would lead you" (Johnson).

Do not, as some *ungracious*¹ pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
 Whilst, like a *puffed*² and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
 And *recks*³ not his own *rede*.⁴

Laertes. O, fear *me*⁵ not.
 I stay too long:—but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
*Occasion*⁶ smiles upon a second leave.

Polonius. Yet⁷ here, *Laertes*! Aboard,
 aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
 And you are stay'd for. There,—my blessing
 with you! [*Laying his hand on LAERTES' head.*]

And these few precepts in thy memory
 Look thou *character*.⁸ Give thy thoughts no
 tongue,

Nor any *unproportion'd*⁹ thought *his*¹⁰ act.

Be thou familiar, but by no means *vulgar*.¹¹

The friends thou hast, and* their adoption tried,
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Be-
 ware

Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
 Bear't, that *the opposèd*¹² may beware of thee.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:

Take each man's *censure*,¹³ but reserve thy judg-
 ment.

*Costly*¹⁴ thy habit as thy purse can buy,

But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy:

For the apparel oft proclaims the man;

And they in France, of the best rank and station,
 Are most select and generous, *chief*¹⁵ in that.

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;

¹*graceless*

²*puffed up, self-
confident*

³*follows*

⁴*counsel*

⁵*for me
(dative)*

⁶*opportunity*

⁷*still*

⁸*write*

⁹*unsuitable*

¹⁰*its*

¹¹*common*

¹²*th' opposed,
opponent*

¹³*opinion*

¹⁴*as costly*

¹⁵*particularly*

* Tried after having adopted them.

For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
 And borrowing dulls the edge of *husbandry*.¹
 This above all,—to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.

¹*economy*

Farewell: my blessing *season*² this in thee!

80

Laertes. Most humbly do I take my leave,
 my lord.

²*ripen*

Polonius. The time *invites*³ you; go, your
 servants *tend*.⁴

³*summons*⁴*attend*

Laertes. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember
 well

What I have said to you.

Ophelia. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laertes. Farewell. [*Exit LAERTES*.]

Polonius. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said
 to you?

Ophelia. So please you, something touching
 the Lord Hamlet.

Polonius. Marry, well *bethought*:⁵

90

⁵*thought of*

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of *late*⁶

⁶*recently*

Given private time to you; and you yourself
 Have of your audience been most free and
 bounteous:

If it be so—as so 'tis *put*⁷ on me,
 And that in *way*⁸ of caution—I must tell you,
 You do not understand yourself so clearly,
 As it *behoves*⁹ my daughter, and your honour.

⁷*forced*⁸*(the) way*⁹*befits*

What is between you? give me up the truth.

Ophelia. He hath, my lord, of late made
 many *tenders*¹⁰

¹⁰*offers*

Of his affection to me.

100

Polonius. Affection! pooh! you speak like a
*green*¹¹ girl.

¹¹*inexperienced*

*Unsifted*¹² in such perilous circumstance.

¹²*untried*

Do you believe his *tenders*,¹³ as you call them?

¹³*offers*

Ophelia. I do not know, my lord, what I
 should think.

Polonius. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;

That you have ta'en these *tenders*¹ for true pay,
Which are not *sterling*.² *Tender*³ yourself more
dearly;

Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus,—you'll *tender*⁴ me a fool.

Ophelia. My lord, he hath importuned me
with love,

In honourable *fashion*.⁵

110

Polonius. Ay, *fashion*⁶ you may call it; go
to, go to.

Ophelia. And hath given countenance to his
speech, my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Polonius. Ay, *springes*⁷ to catch woodcocks.

I do know,

When the blood burns, how *prodigal*⁸ the soul
Lends the tongue vows: *these blazes, *daughter*,⁹
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even *in*¹⁰ their promise, as it is a-making,—

You must not take for *fire*.¹¹ From this time

120

Be somewhat scancer of your maiden presence;
Set your *entreatments*¹² at a higher rate

Than a command to parley. *For*¹³ Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young;

And with a *larger tether*¹⁴ may he walk

Than may be given you. *In few*,¹⁵ *Ophelia*,

Do not believe his vows; for they are *brokers*,¹⁶—

Not of that *dye*¹⁷ which their *investments*¹⁸ show,

But mere *implorators*¹⁹ of unholy suits,

*Breathing*²⁰ like sanctified and pious bonds,

130

The better to beguile. This is *for*²¹ all,—

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,

Have you so slander any *moment*²² leisure,

As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.

Look to't, I *charge*²³ you: come your ways.

Ophelia. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

¹offers²true gold³value⁴exhibit⁵manner⁶passing fancy⁷nets, gins⁸lavishly⁹daugh-*e-ter*,
trisyllable¹⁰at the moment¹¹dissyllable¹²favors¹³as for¹⁴more liberty¹⁵in short¹⁶go-between¹⁷appearance¹⁸dress¹⁹solicitors²⁰whispering²¹(once) for²²moment's²³command

*These blazes (*fires of passion*) are like flashes, giving more light than heat, and which go out even while the promise is being made.

SCENE IV.—*The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Hamlet. The air bites shrewdly;¹ it is very cold.

¹*keenly*

Horatio. It is a nipping and an eager² air.

²*sharp*

Hamlet. What hour³ now?

³*dissyllable*

Horatio. I think it lacks of twelve.

Marcellus. No, it is struck.

Horatio. Indeed? I heard it not: it then draws near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont⁴ to walk.

⁴*custom*

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*]

What does this mean, my lord?

Hamlet. The king doth wake⁵ to-night, and takes his rouse,⁶

⁵*feast late*

Keeps wassail,⁷ and the swaggering up-spring reels;⁸

⁶*bumper*

⁷*revelry*

⁸*dance staggers*

And, as he drains his draughts of *Rhenish*⁹ down, 10
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

⁹*Rhine wine*

Horatio. Is it a custom?

Hamlet. Ay, marry, is't:

But to my mind,—though I am native here
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

*This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
Makes us traduced¹⁰ and tax'd¹¹ of other nations:
They clepe¹² us drunkards, and with swinish
phrase

¹⁰*disgraced*

¹¹*censured*

¹²*call*

¹³*defile*

Soil¹³ our addition,¹⁴ and, indeed, it takes

20

¹⁴*title*

*These drinking habits of ours cause other nations to overlook our good qualities and to regard us as drunkards. So with individuals: some particular trait (*vicious mole*)—either inherited at birth and therefore no fault of the man, developing (*o'ergrowth*) some disposition that proves too strong for him, or brought about by some bad habit that outweighs (*o'erleavens*) his pleasant manners—no matter if inherited (*nature's livery*) or an acquired habit (*fortune's star*)—is enough to cause most people to judge the man (*general censure*) by this particular defect, and to overlook his other qualities (*their virtues else*), though they be many (*infinite*) and full of goodness (*pure as grace*).

From our achievements, though perform'd at
height,¹

The pith and marrow of our attribute.

So, oft it chances in particular men,

That, for some vicious *mole of nature*² in them,

As, in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,

Since nature cannot choose *his*³ origin),

By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,

Oft breaking down the *pales*⁴ and forts of reason;

Or by some habit, that *too much o'er-leavens*⁵

The form of *plausive*⁶ manners;—that these
men,—

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,

Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—

Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,

As infinite as man may *undergo*,⁷)

*Shall*⁸ in the general censure take corruption

From that particular fault: the *drum of base*⁹

Doth all the noble substance often *dout*,¹⁰

To *his*¹¹ own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Horatio. Look, my lord, it comes!

Hamlet. Angels and ministers of grace,
defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd, 40
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from
hell,

Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a *questionable*¹² shape,
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, Father, Royal Dane: O, answer me!

Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, *hearsèd*¹³ in death,
Have burst their *cerements*;¹⁴ why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly *inurn'd*,¹⁵

Hath *oped*¹⁶ his ponderous and marble jaws, 50
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,

¹at best

²a mark on the
body

³its

⁴defences

⁵affects too
strongly

30 ⁶pleasing

⁷accumulate

⁸will

⁹portion of evil

¹⁰do out,
destroy

¹¹its

¹²inviting ques-
tion

¹³entombed

¹⁴wrapping for
the dead

¹⁵interred

¹⁶opened

Making night hideous; and we¹ fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our *disposition*,²
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*The Ghost beckons* HAMLET.

Horatio. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some *impartment*³ did desire
To you alone.

Marcellus. Look, with what courteous action
It *waves*⁴ you to a more *removèd*⁵ ground:
But do not go with it.

Horatio. No, by no means,

Hamlet. It will not speak; then I will follow
it.

Horatio. Do not, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again:—I'll follow it.

Horatio. What if it tempt you toward the
flood, my lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That *beetles o'er*⁶ his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might *deprive*⁷ your sovereignty of
reason,

And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts *toys*⁸ of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Hamlet. It waves me still.—Go on; I'll fol-
low thee.

Marcellus. You shall not go, my lord.

Hamlet. Hold off your hands.

Horatio. Be ruled; you shall not go.

Hamlet. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body

¹us

²nature

³communica-
tion

⁴beckons
⁵remote

⁶juts or hangs
over

⁷take away

⁸idle fancies

60

70

80

As hardy as the Nemean lion's *nerve*.¹

[*Ghost beckons.*

Still am I call'd:—unhand me, gentlemen;—

[*Breaking from them.*

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that *lets*²
me:—

I say, away!—Go on; I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET.*

Horatio. He *waxes*³ desperate with imagination.

Marcellus. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Horatio. *Have after*.⁴—To what issue will
this come? 90 ⁴*follow*

Marcellus. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Horatio. Heaven will direct *it*.⁵

Marcellus. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A more remote Part of the Platform.*

Re-enter Ghost and HAMLET.

Hamlet. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak;
I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Hamlet. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must *render*⁶ up myself.

Hamlet. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious
hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Hamlet. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou
shalt hear.

Hamlet. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, 10

¹*muscle*

²*hinders*

³*grows*

⁵*the issue*

⁶*deliver*

Cath

And, *for*¹ the day, confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of *nature*,²
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am
*forbid*³

To *tell*⁴ the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young
blood;

Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their
spheres;

Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine;

But this *eternal blazon*⁵ must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—*List*,⁶ list, O list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

Hamlet. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural
murder.

Hamlet. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as *in the best*⁷ it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Hamlet. *Haste me to know* 't,⁸ that I, with
wings as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee *apt*;⁹

And duller *shouldst*¹⁰ thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe *wharf*,¹¹

Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet,
hear:

'Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Den-
mark

Is by a forgèd *process*¹² of my death

*Rankly*¹³ abused: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life

Now wears his crown.

¹during²life³forbidden⁴declare⁵revelation of
eternity⁶listen⁷at best⁸tell me quickly⁹ready¹⁰wouldst¹¹bank¹²account¹³grossly

20

30

40

Hamlet. O my prophetic soul! my uncle!

Ghost. But, *soft!*¹ methinks I scent the morning air;

Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my *secure*² hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed *hebenon*³ in a vial,
And in the *porches*⁴ of mine ears did pour
The leperous *distilment*⁵; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with *blood*⁶ of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it *courses*⁷ through
The natural gates and *alleys*⁸ of the body;
And, with a *sudden vigour*,⁹ it doth *posset*¹⁰
And curd, like *eager*¹¹ droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most *instant*¹² *tetter*¹³ *bark'd about*,¹⁴
Most *lazar*¹⁵-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once *despatch'd*:¹⁶
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd,¹⁷ *disappointed*,¹⁸ *unaneled*;¹⁹
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast *nature*²⁰ in thee, bear it not;
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to *heaven*,²¹
And to those *thorns*²² that in her bosom lodge,
To prod and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the *matin*,²³ to be near,
And 'gins²⁴ to *pale*²⁵ his *ineffectual*²⁶ fire:
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*]

Hamlet. O all you host of heaven! O earth!
What else?

And shall I couple hell?—O, fie!—Hold, hold,
my heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not *instant*²⁷ old,
But bear me stiffly up.—Remember thee?—

¹*hush*

²*unsuspicious*

³*henbane*

⁴*entrances*

⁵*distillation*

⁶*(the) blood*

⁷*rushes*

⁸*passages*

⁹*rapid action*

¹⁰*curdle*

¹¹*sour*

¹²*instantaneous*

¹³*scab*

¹⁴*covered*

¹⁵*leper*

¹⁶*deprived*

¹⁷*without*

sacrament

¹⁸*unprepared*

¹⁹*without*

extreme

unction

²⁰*natural*

affection

²¹*i.e. punishment of*

²²*stings of conscience*

²³*the morning*

²⁴*begins*

²⁵*make pale*

²⁶*ineffectual*

²⁷*instantly*

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted *globe*.¹ Remember thee!

Yea, from the *table*² of my memory 80

I'll wipe away all trivial *fond*³ records,

All *saws*⁴ of books, all forms, all *pressures*⁵ past,

That youth and observation copied there;

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!

O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain!

My *tables*,⁶—meet it is I set it down,

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain; 90

At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark:

[*Writing.*

So, uncle, there you *are*.⁷ Now to my *word*;⁸

It is, "Adieu, adieu! remember me:"

I have sworn 't.

Horatio. [*Within.*] My lord! my lord!

Marcellus. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!

Horatio. [*Within.*] Heaven *secure*⁹ him!

Marcellus. [*Within.*] So be it!

Horatio. [*Within.*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!

Hamlet. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Marcellus. How is 't, my noble lord?

Horatio. What news, my lord?

Hamlet. O, wonderful!

Horatio. Good my lord, tell it.

Hamlet. No; You'll reveal it. 100

Horatio. Not I, my lord, by heaven!

Marcellus. Nor I, my lord!

Hamlet. How say you, then; would heart of
man once think it?—

But you'll be secret?

Horatio.

Marcellus.

} Ay, by heaven, my lord.

¹*head*

²*tablet*

³*foolish*

⁴*sayings*

⁵*impressions*

⁶*tablets*

⁷*i.e. set down*

⁸*watchword*

⁹*protect*

Hamlet. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark

But he's an *arrant*¹ knave.

Horatio. There needs no ghost, my lord,
come² from the grave

To tell us this.

Hamlet. Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more *circumstance*³ at all,

I hold it fit that we shake hands and part: 110

You, as your business and desire shall point you;

For every man hath business and desire,

Such as it is:—and, for mine own poor part,

Look you, I'll go pray.

Horatio. These are but wild and *whirling*⁴
words, my lord.

Hamlet. I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily.

Horatio. There's no offence, my lord.

Hamlet. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is,

Horatio,

And much offence too. Touching this vision
here

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you: 120

For⁵ your desire to know what is between us,

O'ermaster⁶ 't as you may. And now, good
friends,

As you are friends, scholars, and *soldiers*,⁷

Give⁸ me one poor request.

Horatio. What is't, my lord? we will.

Hamlet. Never make known what you have
seen to-night.

Horatio. } My lord, we will not.

Marcellus. } Nay, but swear 't.

Hamlet. In faith,

Horatio.

My lord, not I.

Marcellus. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Hamlet. Upon my sword.⁹

Marcellus. We have sworn, my lord already.

Hamlet. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed. 130

¹*absolute,*
thorough

²(to) come

³*circumlocution*

⁴*excited*

⁵*as for*

⁶*get over it*

⁷*trisyllable*

⁸*grant*

⁹*i.e. this cross*

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hamlet. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, *truepenny*?¹—

Come on—you hear this fellow *in the cellarage*,²—
Consent to swear.

Horatio. Propose the oath, my lord.

Hamlet. Never to speak of this that you have seen,

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hamlet. *Hic et ubique*?³ then we'll shift our ground.—

Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword: 140

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hamlet. Well said, old mole! canst *work*⁴ i' the earth so fast?

A worthy *pioneer*⁵—Once more remove, good friends.

Horatio. O day and night, but this is *wondrous*⁶ strange!

Hamlet. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heaven and earth,

Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;—

150

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To *put*⁷ an *antic*⁸ disposition on,—

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms *encumbered*⁹ thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As, “Well, well, we know;”—or, “We could, *an*
*if*¹⁰ we would;”

Or, “If we *list*¹¹ to speak;”—or, “There be, an if
they might;”

¹*honest fellow*

²*underground*

³*here and everywhere*

⁴*burrow*

⁵*miner*

⁶*wondrously*

⁷*assume*

⁸*strange*

⁹*folded*

¹⁰*and if*

¹¹*should please*

Or such ambiguous *giving out*,¹ to note 160
That you know aught of me:—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your *most*² need help you,
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hamlet. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*] So, gentlemen.

With all my love I do commend me to you;

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and *friending*³ to you,

God willing, shall not *lack*.⁴ Let us go in together;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is *out of joint*.⁵—O curséd spite, 170

That ever I was born to set it right!

Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*]

¹*exclamation*

²*greatest*

³*friendliness*

⁴*be lacking*

⁵*utterly disordered*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in POLONIUS' House

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.

Polonius. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Reynaldo. I will, my lord.

Polonius. You shall⁶ do *marvellous*⁷ wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry Of his behaviour.

Reynaldo. My lord, I did intend it.

Polonius. Marry,⁸ well said; very well said.

Look you, sir,

*Inquire *me*⁹ first what *Danskers*¹⁰ are in Paris; And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,

⁶*will*

⁷*marvelously*

⁸*by Mary*

⁹*for me*

¹⁰*Danes*

* Get to know what Danes (*Danskers*) are in Paris, and how they live (*how*), with whom they associate (*who*), what their fortune is (*what means*), where they lodge (*keep*), what company they frequent (*what company*), and at what cost (*expense*).

What company, at what expense; and finding,
By this *encompassment*¹ and *drift of question*,²
That they do know my son, *come you more
nearer

10

¹*circumvention*²*indirect means*

Than your *particular demands*³ will touch it;
Take you,⁴ as 'twere, some distant knowledge
of him;

³*direct questions*⁴*assume*

As thus, "I know his father, and his friends,
And, *in part*,⁵ him;"—do you mark this, Reyn-
aldo?

⁵*slightly*

Reynaldo. Ay, very well, my lord.

Polonius. "And, in part, him; but," you
may say, "not well:

But if 't be he I mean, he's very wild;

*Addicted*⁶ so and so;"—and there *put on*⁷ him

20

⁶*inclined to*⁷*attribute to*⁸*gross*

What forgeries you please; marry, none so *rank*⁸

As may dishonour him; take heed of that;

But, sir, such *wanton*,⁹ wild, and usual *slips*¹⁰

⁹*unrestrained*¹⁰*shortcomings*

As are companions noted and most known

To youth and liberty.

Reynaldo. As gaming, my lord.

Polonius. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swear-
ing, quarrelling,

You may go so far.

Reynaldo. My lord, that would dishonour
him.

Polonius. Faith, no; as you may *season*¹¹ it
in the charge.

¹¹*represent*

But *breathe*¹² his faults so *quaintly*¹³

That they may seem the *taints*¹⁴ of *liberty*;¹⁵

30

¹²*whisper*¹³*ingeniously*¹⁴*blemishes*¹⁵*free dis-
position*

The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind;

A savageness in *unreclaimed*¹⁶ blood,

¹⁶*untamed*

Of general assault.

Reynaldo. But, my good lord,—

Polonius. Wherefore should you do this?

Reynaldo. Ay,¹⁷ my lord,

¹⁷*two syllables*

I would know that.

Polonius. Marry, sir, here's my *drift*;¹⁸

¹⁸*meaning*

* By this roundabout and indirect inquiry you will arrive much nearer to the truth than you possibly could by direct questions.

And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant: You laying these slight <i>sullies</i> ¹ on my son, As 'twere a thing a little <i>soil'd</i> ² i' the working, Mark you,		¹ <i>stains</i> ² <i>defiled</i>
*Your party in converse, <i>him</i> ³ you would sound, Having ever seen in the <i>prenominate</i> ⁴ crimes The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured, He <i>closes</i> ⁵ with you <i>in this consequence</i> ; ⁶ "Good sir," or so; or "friend," or "gentle- man"—	40	³ <i>he whom</i> ⁴ <i>forenamed</i> ⁵ <i>concludes</i> ⁶ <i>as follows</i>
According to the phrase or the <i>addition</i> ⁷ Of man and country.		⁷ <i>title</i>
<i>Reynaldo.</i> Very good, my lord.		
<i>Polonius.</i> And then, sir, does he this,—he does—what was I about to say? I was about to say something:—where did I <i>leave</i> ? ⁸		⁸ <i>leave off</i>
<i>Reynaldo.</i> At "closes in the consequence," At "friend or so," and "gentleman."	50	
<i>Polonius.</i> At "closes in the consequence,"— <i>ay, marry</i> ; ⁹		⁹ <i>by Mary</i>
He closes with you thus:—"I know the gentle- man; I saw him yesterday, or t'other day, Or then, or then, with such, or such; and, as you say, There was he gaming; there <i>o'ertook in's rouse</i> ; ¹⁰ There falling out at tennis;" or so forth.— See you now; †Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth: ‡And thus do we of ¹¹ wisdom and of <i>reach</i> , ¹² With <i>windlasses</i> , ¹³ and with <i>assays of bias</i> , ¹⁴ By <i>indirections</i> ¹⁵ find directions out:	60	¹⁰ <i>overtaken in his bumper, i.e. intoxi- cated</i> ¹¹ <i>by means of</i> ¹² <i>forethought</i> ¹³ <i>roundabout ways</i> ¹⁴ <i>indirect attempts</i> ¹⁵ <i>indirect methods</i>

* And so if the person you are conversing with, he whom you would sound, has ever seen my son commit any of the aforesaid faults, he will be led on in natural sequence to end by saying, "Good sir," etc.

† As a fish (*carp*) is taken by a bait, so these men, swallowing your insinuating talk (*bait of falsehood*), will tell it to the world as if true.

‡ We find the direct way to what we desire by means of wisdom and forethought, and by using roundabout methods and experiments such as we would employ to ascertain the effect of bias upon the course of a bowl.

So, by my former *lecture*¹ and advice,
*Shall*² you my son. You *have me*,³ have you not?

Reynaldo. My lord, I have.

Polonius. God be wi'⁴ you; fare you well.

Reynaldo. Good my lord!

Polonius. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Reynaldo. I shall, my lord.

Polonius. And let him *ply his music*.⁵

Reynaldo. Well, my lord.

Polonius. Farewell! [Exit REYNALDO.

Enter OPHELIA.

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter? 70

Ophelia. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so
*affrighted!*⁶

Polonius. With what, i' the name of God?

Ophelia. My lord, as I was sewing in my
*closet,*⁷

Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all *unbraced*;⁸
 No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
 Ungarter'd, and *down-gyved*⁹ to his ancle;
 Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
 And with a look so piteous in *purport*,¹⁰
 As if he had been loosèd out of hell

*To*¹¹ speak of horrors,—he comes before me. 80

Polonius. Mad for thy love?

Ophelia. My lord, I do not know;

But, truly, I do fear it.

Polonius. What said he?

Ophelia. He took me by the wrist, and held
 me hard;

Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
 And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
 He falls to such *perusal*¹² of my face,
 As¹³ he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
 At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
 He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
 As¹⁴ it did seem to shatter all his *bulk*,¹⁵
 And end his being: that done, he lets me go:

¹*instructions*

²*i.e. find out*

³*understand*

⁴*with*

⁵*give him free
rein*

⁶*terrified*

⁷*private room*

⁸*unfastened*

⁹*slipped down*

¹⁰*meaning*

¹¹*in order to*

¹²*careful exam-
ination*

¹³*as if*

¹⁴*that*

¹⁵*body*

And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Polonius. Come, go with me: I will go seek
the king.

This is the very *ecstasy*¹ of love;
Whose violent property *fordoes*² itself,
And leads the will to desperate undertakings, 100
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.—
What, have you given him any *hard words*³ of
late?

Ophelia. No, my good lord; but, as you did
command,
I did *repel*⁴ his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Polonius. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not *quoted*⁵ him: I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to *wreck*⁶ thee; but, beshrew my
jealousy!⁷

By heaven, it is as *proper*⁸ to our age 110
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger *sort*⁹
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be *known*¹⁰; which, being kept close,
might move

*More grief *to hide*,¹¹ than hate *to utter*¹² love.

Come. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and
Guildenstern!

¹madness

²destroys

³harsh answers

⁴send back

⁵noted

⁶ruin

⁷suspicion

⁸natural

⁹kind

¹⁰revealed

¹¹by hiding

¹²by disclosing

* Hamlet's madness would cause more grief if concealed than the revelation of his affection for Ophelia would cause resentment (*i. e.*, on the part of the king and queen).

Moreover¹ that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke²
Our hasty sending.³ Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since nor⁴ the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put
him

So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days⁵ brought up with
him,

And since so neighbour'd to his youth⁶ and
humour,⁷

That you vouchsafe your rest⁸ here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies⁹
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion¹⁰ you may glean,
Whether aught,¹¹ to us unknown, afflicts him
thus,

That open'd,¹² lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much
talk'd of you;

And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry¹³ and good will
As to expend¹⁴ your time with us a while,

*For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation¹⁵ shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.¹⁶

Rosencrantz.

Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of¹⁷ us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guildenstern.

But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,¹⁸
To lay our service freely at your feet,
And be commanded.

¹besides

²incite

³summons

⁴neither

10

⁵from childhood

⁶near his age

⁷like him in

disposition

⁸promise to stay

⁹companionship

¹⁰circumstances

¹¹anything

¹²when known

20

¹³courtesy

¹⁴spend

¹⁵visit

¹⁶token of
gratitude

¹⁷over

30

¹⁸inclination or
intention

* "As the means and for the furtherance of what we hope to accomplish,"
(Hunter).

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changèd son; go, some of you,
And bring¹ these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

¹conduct

Guildenstern. Heavens make our presence,
and our practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and some Attendants.

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. The ambassadors from Norway,
my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

40

King. Thou still² hast been the father of
good news.

²ever, constantly

Polonius. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my
good liege,³

³liege lord

I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure⁴
As it hath used to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

⁴surely

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to
hear.

50

Polonius. Give first admittance to the am-
bassadors;

My news shall be the fruit⁵ to that great feast.

⁵dessert

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring
them in.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.⁶

⁶ill-health

Queen. I doubt,¹ it is no other but *the main*,²
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.
King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother *Nor-*
way?³

Voltimand. Most fair return of greetings,
and desires:

Upon our first,⁴ he *sent out*⁵ to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the *Polack*,⁶
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely *borne in hand*,⁷—*sends out arrests*⁸
On Fortinbras; which he, *in brief*,⁹ obeys;
Receives rebuke from *Norway*,¹⁰ and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the *assay of arms*¹¹ against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual *fee*,¹²
And his *commission*¹³ to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the *Polack*.¹⁴
With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Giving a paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet *pass*¹⁵
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.

King. It *likes*¹⁶ us well;
And, at our more consider'd time,¹⁷ we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime, we thank you for your well-took
labour:

Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

¹suspect
²the main cause

³king of

60

⁴at once
⁵issued orders
⁶Pole

70

⁷deluded
⁸(he) sends out
orders to stop
⁹in short
¹⁰king of
¹¹make trial of
battle

¹²reward
¹³authority
¹⁴Pole

¹⁵passage

80

¹⁶pleases
¹⁷greater leisure

Polonius. This business is well ended.
My *liege*,¹ and madam, to *expostulate*²
What majesty *should*³ be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the *soul*⁴ of *wit*,⁵
And tediousness the limbs and outward flour-
ishes,

I will be brief:—your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that *go*.⁶

Queen. *More matter, with less *art*.⁷

Polonius. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Mad let us grant him, then: and now *remains*,⁸ 100
That we find out the cause of this effect,—
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect *defective*⁹ comes by cause;
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

Perpend.¹⁰

I have a daughter—have while she is mine—
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me *this*:¹¹ now, *gather*,¹² and surmise.

[*Reads.*] “To the celestial, and my soul's idol,
the most *beautified*¹³ Ophelia,”—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; “*beautified*”
is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus:

[*Reads.*] “In her excellent white bosom, these,”
etc.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Polonius. Good madam, stay awhile; I will
be faithful.

[*Reads.*] “Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;

¹*liege lord*
²*enlarge upon*
³*ought to*

90 ⁴*essence*
⁵*wisdom*

⁶*pass*
⁷*artificial talk*

⁸*(it) remains*

⁹*really a defect*

¹⁰*consider*

¹¹*i.e. letter*

¹²*come around*
me

110 ¹³*endowed with*
beauty

* Give some more definite information; do not exhibit such ingenuity in explanation (*i. e.*, come to the point).

*Doubt*¹ truth to be a liar;

But never doubt I love.

“O dear Ophelia, I am *ill*² at these numbers;³ 120
I have not art to *reckon*⁴ my groans: but that I
love thee best, O *most best*,⁵ believe it. Adieu.

“Thine evermore, most dear lady,

Whilst this *machine*⁶ is⁷ to him,

HAMLET.”

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me:
And *more above*,⁸ hath his solicitings,
As they fell out *by*⁹ time, *by*⁹ means and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Received his love?

Polonius. What do you think of me? 130

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Polonius. I would *fain*¹⁰ prove so. But what
might you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me), what might you,
Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or *given my heart a winking*,¹¹ mute and dumb;
Or *look'd upon*¹² this love with *idle sight*,¹³—
What might you think? No, I went *round*¹⁴ to
work,

And my young mistress thus I did *bespeak*.¹⁵
“Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy *sphere*,¹⁶
This must not be:” and then I *precepts*¹⁷ gave
her

That she should lock herself from his *resort*,¹⁸
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the *fruits*¹⁹ of my advice;
And he, repulsed,—a short tale to make—
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a *watch*,²⁰ thence into a weakness;
Thence to a *lightness*,²¹ and by this declension 150

¹suspect

²unskilled

³this verse-mak-
ing

⁴number

⁵double sup.

⁶body

⁷belongs

⁸in addition

⁹with

¹⁰gladly

¹¹winked at

¹²encouraged

¹³foolish

¹⁴approval

¹⁵straightfor-
wardly

¹⁶address

¹⁷position

¹⁸instructions

¹⁹company

²⁰consequences

²¹wakefulness

²²mental de-
rangement

Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we¹ mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Polonius. Hath there been such a time—I'd
fain² know that—

That I have positively said, "'Tis so,"
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Polonius. Take *this*³ from *this*,⁴ if this be
otherwise: [*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.⁵

King. How may we try it further? 160

Polonius. You know, sometimes he walks for
hours together

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Polonius. At such a time I'll loose⁶ my
daughter to him:

Be you and I behind an arras⁷ then;
Mark the encounter,⁸ if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,⁹
But keep a farm and carters.¹⁰

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, reading.

Queen. But look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading. 170

Polonius. Away, I do beseech you, both away:
I'll board¹¹ him presently;¹²—O, give me leave.¹³—

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Hamlet. Well, God-a-mercy.

Polonius. Do you know me, my lord?

Hamlet. Excellent¹⁴ well; you are a fish-
monger.

Polonius. Not I, my lord.

¹(which) we all

²gladly

³my head

⁴my shoulder

⁵i.e. of the earth

⁶permit him
to see her

⁷tapestry

⁸watch their
meeting

⁹statesman

¹⁰be a farmer

¹¹accost

¹²immediately

¹³I beg pardon
(addressed to
Hamlet)

¹⁴excellently

Hamlet. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius. Honest, my lord!

Hamlet. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world 180
goes is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Polonius. That's very true, my lord.

Hamlet. *For if the sun breed maggots in a
dead dog, being a god kissing *carrion*,¹—Have
you a daughter?

¹*dead flesh*

Polonius. I have, my lord.

Hamlet. †Let her not walk i' the sun: *con-*
*ception*² is a blessing; but not as your daughter
may *conceive*:³—friend, look to't.

²*understanding*

³*understand*

Polonius. How say you *by*⁴ that?—[*Aside.*] 190
*Still*⁵ harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me
not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far
gone, *far gone*:⁶ and truly in my youth I suffered
much extremity for love; very near this. I'll
speak to him again.—What do you read, my
lord?

⁴*with reference
to*

⁵*ever*

⁶*i.e. in love*

Hamlet. Words, words, words.

Polonius. What is the matter, my lord?

Hamlet. Between *who*?⁷

⁷*whom*

Polonius. I mean, the *matter*⁸ that you read,
my lord. 200

⁸*subject matter*

Hamlet. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue
says here, that old men have grey beards; that
their faces are wrinkled; their eyes *purging*⁹
thick amber and plum-tree gum; and that they
have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most
weak *hams*:¹⁰ all which, sir, though I most power-
fully and potently believe, yet I hold it not *hon-*
*esty*¹¹ to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir,
*should*¹² be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could
go backward. 210

⁹*expelling*

¹⁰*legs*

¹¹*right*

¹²*would*

*If the sun, though he is a god, by his heat and light breeds maggots in a
dead dog which is dead flesh, so no influence, however good, can do otherwise
than bring out the vileness of man who is so corrupt a creature.

† Do not allow her free liberty: understanding is a blessing, but if you
allow your daughter to be free from restraint, she may understand what you
would not approve of.

Polonius. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Hamlet. Into my grave.

Polonius. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—
[*Aside.*] How *pregnant*¹ sometimes his replies are! a *happiness*² that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 220

Hamlet. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part *withal*;³ except my life, except my life, except my life.

Polonius. Fare you well, my lord. [*Going.*]

Hamlet. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Polonius. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Rosencrantz. [*To POLONIUS.*] God save you, 230
sir! [*Exit POLONIUS.*]

Guildenstern. Mine honoured lord!

Rosencrantz. My most dear lord!

Hamlet. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Rosencrantz. As the *indifferent*⁴ children of the earth.

Guildenstern. Happy in that we are not overhappy;

On Fortune's cap we are not the very *button*.⁵

Hamlet. Nor the soles of her shoe? 240

Rosencrantz. Neither, my lord.

Hamlet. What's the news?

Rosencrantz. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Hamlet. Then is *doomsday*⁶ near: but your news is not true. Let me question more *in particular*.⁷ what have you, my good friends, de-

¹to the point

²good fortune

³with

⁴ordinary

⁵top or tuft

⁶judgment day

⁷particularly

served at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guildestern. Prison, my lord! 250

Hamlet. Denmark's a prison.

Rosencrantz. Then is the world one.

Hamlet. A goodly¹ one; in which there are many confines,² wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

Rosencrantz. We think not so, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Rosencrantz. Why, then, your ambition 260 makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Hamlet. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guildestern. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Hamlet. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Rosencrantz. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow. 270

Hamlet. *Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched³ heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to⁴ the court? for, by my fay,⁵ I cannot reason.⁶

Rosencrantz. } We'll wait upon⁷ you.

Guildestern. }

Hamlet. No such matter: I will not sort⁸ you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.⁹ But, in the beaten way of friendship, 280 what make you at¹⁰ Elsinore?

Rosencrantz. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.¹¹

¹*fine, spacious*
²*places of confinement*

³*ambitious*

⁴*(go) to*

⁵*faith*

⁶*argue with you*

⁷*attend*

⁸*class*

⁹*i.e. by sad thoughts*

¹⁰*brings you to*

¹¹*business*

* If ambition is a shadow, then beggars (men without ambition) are the only real bodies, whilst monarchs and heroes (ambitious men) are only shadows.

Hamlet. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a¹ halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own *inclining*?² Is it a *free visitation*?³ Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guildenstern. What should we say, my lord? 290

Hamlet. Why any thing,—but to the purpose.⁴ You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour.⁵ I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Rosencrantz. To what end,⁶ my lord?

Hamlet. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth,⁷ by the obligation of our ever preserved love, and by what more 300 dear a better proposer⁸ could charge you withal, be even⁹ and direct¹⁰ with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

Rosencrantz. [Aside to GUILDENSTERN.] What say you?

Hamlet. [Aside.] Nay, then, I have an eye of¹¹ you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guildenstern. My lord, we were sent for.

Hamlet. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent¹² your discovery,¹³ and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather.¹⁴ 310 I have of late (but wherefore I know not) lost all my mirth, *forgone*¹⁵ all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile¹⁶ promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,—this brave¹⁷ o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted¹⁸ with golden fire,—why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of 320 vapours. What a piece¹⁹ of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty!²⁰ in form, in moving, how express²¹ and admirable!

¹(at) a

²accord

³unsolicited visit

⁴only (speak) to the point

⁵palliate

⁶for what purpose

⁷since we were brought up together

⁸more skillful pleader

⁹frank, fair

¹⁰straightforward

¹¹upon

¹²anticipate

¹³disclosure

¹⁴not be violated

¹⁵abandoned

¹⁶barren

¹⁷splendidly ornamented

¹⁸adorned

¹⁹i.e. wonderful piece

²⁰mental power

²¹exactly adapted

in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the *paragon*¹ of animals! And yet, to me, what is this *quintessence*² of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman *neither*,³ though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Rosencrantz. My lord, there was *no such* 330 *stuff*⁴ in my thoughts.

Hamlet. Why did you laugh, then, when I said "man delights not me?"

Rosencrantz. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what *Lenten*⁵ entertainment the players shall receive from you: we *coted*⁶ them on the way; and *hither* are they coming, to offer you service.

Hamlet. He that plays the king shall be welcome,—his majesty shall have tribute of me; the 340 adventurous knight shall use his *foil*⁷ and *target*,⁸ the lover shall not sigh *gratis*,⁹ the *humorous*¹⁰ man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are *tickled o' the sere*,¹¹ and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they?

Rosencrantz. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the *city*.¹²

Hamlet. *How *chances*¹³ it they travel? their 350 residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rosencrantz. I think, their *inhibition*¹⁴ comes by the means of the *late innovation*.¹⁵

Hamlet. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so *followed*?¹⁶

Rosencrantz. No, indeed, they are not.

Hamlet. How comes it? Do they grow 360 *rusty*?¹⁷

¹*pattern*

²*highest essence*

³*double neg.*

⁴*nothing of the kind*

⁵*scanty, spare*

⁶*passed by*

⁷*sword*

⁸*shield*

⁹*without reward*

¹⁰*capricious*

¹¹*easily set laughing*

¹²*Copenhagen*

¹³*happens*
(verb)

¹⁴*legal prohibition*

¹⁵*lately passed injunction*

¹⁶*run after*

¹⁷*careless*

* How does it happen that they are a strolling company? Permanent occupation of a theater would bring them more profit and higher reputation.

Rosencrantz. *Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an *aiery*¹ of children, little *eyases*,² that cry out on the *top of question*,³ and are most *tyrannically clapped*⁴ for't! these are now the fashion; and so *berattle*⁵ the common *stages*,⁶—so they call them,—that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Hamlet. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they *escoted*?⁷ †Will they *pursue*⁸ the *quality*⁹ no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Rosencrantz. Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to *tarre*¹⁰ them to *controversy*.¹¹ there was for a while, no money bid for *argument*,¹² unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Hamlet. Is't possible?

Guildestern. O, there has been much *throwing about of brains*.¹³

Hamlet. Do the boys *carry it away*?¹⁴

Rosencrantz. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules, and his load too.

Hamlet. It is not very strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make *mows*¹⁵ at him while my father lived, give twenty, 390

¹brood of an eagle
²nestlings
³top of their voices
⁴loudly applauded
⁵cry down
⁶players

⁷paid for
⁸follow
⁹profession

¹⁰urge them on
¹¹quarrel
¹²the theme, subject

¹³controversy
¹⁴win the day

¹⁵grimaces

* No, they do their best (*endeavour*) to act as well as ever (*keep their wonted pace*); but there is a company (*aiery*) of boy-actors (*eyases*) who shriek out their parts at the highest pitch of their voices, and are vehemently applauded. In the plays they act they cry down (*berattle*) the regular actors (*common stages*), so that many men (*wearing rapiers*) hardly dare frequent these theaters on account of the sharp witticisms indulged in by the writers of the plays (*goose quills*).

† Will these boys follow the profession of actor only as long as they are in a choir? When older will they not most likely become regular actors? The playwrights are putting them in the false position of causing them to declaim against a profession which they will eventually adopt.

forty, fifty, a hundred *ducats*¹ a-piece, for his picture in little.² There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

Guildestern. There are the players.

Hamlet. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands,—come: the *appurtenance*³ of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me *comply*⁴ with you in this *garb*,⁵ *lest my *extent*⁶ to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived. 400

Guildestern. In what, my dear lord?

Hamlet. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.⁷

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. Well be⁸ with you, gentlemen!

Hamlet. Hark you, Guildestern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there, is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.⁹ 410

Rosencrantz. Happily¹⁰ he's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Hamlet. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say *right*,¹¹ sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas so, indeed.

Polonius. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Hamlet. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Polonius. The actors are come hither, my lord. 420

Hamlet. Buz, buz!¹²

Polonius. Upon my honour,—

Hamlet. Then came each actor,—

¹see Glossary

²in miniature

³proper accompaniment

⁴link arms

⁵fashion

⁶condescension

⁷heron

⁸be (it)

⁹clothes

¹⁰perchance

¹¹rightly

¹²stale news

* Lest it should appear that my reception (*extent*) of the players, whom I must greet cordially, is more hearty than that I give to you.

Polonius. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene indivisible, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. *For the law 430 of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

Hamlet. O Jephthah, Judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Polonius. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Hamlet. Why,

“One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved *passing*¹ well.”

Polonius. [*Aside.*] Still² on my daughter.

Hamlet. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Polonius. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, 440 I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Hamlet. Nay, that follows not.

Polonius. What follows, then, my lord?

Hamlet. Why,

“As by lot, God wot,”

and then, you know,

“It came to pass, as most like it was,”—
the first *row*³ of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my *abridgment*⁴ comes.

[*Enter four or five Players.*]

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all:—I am 450 glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, my old friend! Thy face is *valanced*⁵ since I saw thee last; com'st thou to *beard*⁶ me in Denmark?—What, my young lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship is *nearer heaven*⁷ than when I saw you last, by the *altitude*⁸ of a *chopine*.⁹ Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not *cracked within the ring*.¹⁰—

¹very

²always

³verse

⁴what puts an
end to my
remarks

⁵bearded

⁶set at defiance

⁷taller

⁸thickness

⁹shoe with
wooden sole

¹⁰broken voice

* *Either*, These (Seneca and Plautus) are the standards of dramatic rule (*law of writ*) and license (*liberty*) to vary it;

Or, These (the players) are the best actors of written drama (*law of writ*), or of improvising (*liberty*) = “to gag” in present theatrical language.

Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see: 460 we'll have a speech *straight*.¹ Come, give us a taste of your *quality*;² come, a *passionate*³ speech.

1st Player. What speech, my lord?

Hamlet. I heard thee speak *me*⁴ a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas *caviare*⁵ to the *general*.⁶ but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters *cried in the top of*⁷ 470 mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much *modesty*⁸ as cunning. I remember one said, there were no *sallets*⁹ in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor *no*¹⁰ matter in the phrase that might *indict*¹¹ the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas *Æneas'* tale to Dido; and *thereabout*¹² of it especially, where he speaks 480 of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line;—let me see, let me see;—

“The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' *Hyrceanian* beast,—”¹³

'Tis not so:—it begins with Pyrrhus:—

“The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose *sable*¹⁴ arms,

Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couchèd in the *ominous*¹⁵ horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion
smear'd

With heraldry more dismal: head to foot

Now is he *total gules*;¹⁶ horridly *trick'd*¹⁷ 490

With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,

Baked and *impasted*¹⁸ with the parching
streets,

That lend a *tyrannous*¹⁹ and damnèd light

¹*straightway*

²*professional skill*

³*full of feeling*

⁴*to me* (dative)

⁵*unappreciated by*

⁶*supply public*

⁷*surpassed*

⁸*simplicity*

⁹*savory herbs*

i.e. *ribaldry*

¹⁰*double neg.*

¹¹*convict*

¹²*that part*
(noun)

¹³*tiger*

¹⁴*black*

¹⁵*fatal*

¹⁶*all red* (bloody)

¹⁷*painted*

¹⁸*covered with a paste*

¹⁹*pitiless*

To their vile murders: roasted in wrath and fire,

And thus *o'er-sized*¹ with *coagulate*² *gore*,³
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So, proceed you.

Polonius. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken;
with good accent, and good discretion. 500

1st Player. "Anon,⁴ he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique
sword,

Rebellious to⁵ his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: *unequal*⁶ match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam *drives*,⁷ in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his *fell*⁸ sword
The *unnerved*⁹ father falls. Then *senseless*¹⁰

Ilium,

Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to *his*¹¹ base, and with a hideous crash
*Takes prisoner*¹² Pyrrhus' ear: for lo! his sword, 510
Which was *declining*¹³ on the *milky*¹⁴ head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, *as a painted*¹⁵ tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
*And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.

But, as we often see, *against*¹⁶ some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the *rack*¹⁷ stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the *orb below*¹⁸
As *hush*¹⁹ as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the *region*,²⁰ so, after Pyrrhus' 520
pause,

Arousèd vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forged for *proof eterne*,²¹
With less *remorse*²² than Pyrrhus' bleeding
sword

Now falls on Priam.—

¹*smear'd*
²*dried*
³*blood*

⁴*soon*

⁵*refusing to*
obey
⁶*unequally*
⁷*strikes*
⁸*cruel*
⁹*feeble*
¹⁰*apparently*
lifeless

¹¹*its*
¹²*strikes on*
¹³*descending*
¹⁴*white-haired*
¹⁵*as in a picture*

¹⁶*before*
¹⁷*clouds*
¹⁸*earth*
¹⁹*silent*
²⁰*sky*

²¹*always im-*
penetrable
²²*pity*

* Unable to decide between his will and that upon which he would vent his anger.

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,

In general *synod*,¹ take away her power;
Break all the spokes and *fellies*² from her wheel,

And bowl the round *nave*³ down the hill of heaven,

As low as to the fiends!"

530

Polonius. This is too long.

Hamlet. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Pr'ythee, say on;—he's for a jig, or he sleeps;—say on;—come to Hecuba.

1st Player. "But who, O, who had seen the mobled⁴ queen——

Hamlet. "The mobled queen?"

Polonius. That's good; "mobled queen" is good.

1st Player. "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning⁵ the flames

With *bisson rheum*,⁶ a *clout*⁷ upon that head
Where late the diadem stood; and, for⁸ a robe,

540

About her lank and all o'er-teemed⁹ loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;

Who¹⁰ this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,

'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:

But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In¹¹ mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,

The instant¹² burst of clamour that she made
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made *milch*¹³ the burning eyes of heaven

550

And passion in¹⁴ the gods."

Polonius. Look, whether he has not turned¹⁵ his colour and has tears in's eyes. Pr'ythee, no more.

¹council²felloes³hub of the wheel⁴muffled up⁵i.e. to put out⁶blinding tears⁷a rag⁸in place of⁹exhausted¹⁰anyone who¹¹in the act of¹²immediate¹³milk-giving,
i.e. tearful¹⁴compassionate¹⁵changed

Hamlet. 'Tis well; I'll have thee *speak out the rest*¹ soon.—Good, my lord, will you see the players well *bestowed*?² Do you hear, let them be well *used*;³ for they are the *abstracts*⁴ and brief *chronicles*⁵ of the time: *after your death *you were better have*⁶ a bad epitaph, than their ill 560 report while you live.

Polonius. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet. God's bodykins, man, much better: use every man *after*⁷ his *desert*,⁸ and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Polonius. Come, sirs.

Hamlet. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a 570 play to-morrow,—[*Exit* POLONIUS, *with all the Players except the first.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1st Player. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could *for a need*,⁹ study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I *would*¹⁰ set down and insert in't, could you not?

1st Player. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Very well.—Follow that lord; and 580 look you mock him not. [*Exit 1st Player.*] [*To* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.] My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Rosencrantz. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Hamlet. Ay, so, God be wi'¹¹ you!—Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and *peasant slave*¹² am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own †*conceit*,¹³

590

¹*complete the speech*²*lodged*³*treated*⁴*summaries*⁵*records*⁶*had better have*⁷*according to*⁸*merits*⁹*if it is necessary*¹⁰*should like to*¹¹*with*¹²*wretched bondman*¹³*conception*

* A bad character during life is worse than a bad epitaph.

† *Conceit* = conception of the part he is playing.

That, from *her*¹ working, all his visage *wann'd*,²
 Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
 A broken voice, and his whole *function*³ suiting
 With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
 For Hecuba!
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
 That he should weep for her? What would he do,
 Had he the motive and the *cue*⁴ for passion
 That I have? He would drown the stage with
 tears,
 And cleave the *general ear*⁵ with horrid speech; 600
 Make mad the guilty, and appal the *free*,⁶
 Confound the ignorant; and *amaze*,⁷ indeed,
 The very faculties of eyes and ears.
 Yet I,
 A dull and *muddy-mettled*⁸ rascal, **peak*,⁹
 Like John-a-dreams,¹⁰ unpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
 Upon whose *property*,¹¹ and most dear life,
 A damn'd *defeat*¹² was made. Am I a coward?
 Who calls me villain? breaks my *pate*¹³ across? 610
 Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
*Tweaks*¹⁴ me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the
 throat,
 As deep as to the lungs? Who does *me this*,¹⁵
 Ha!
 Why, I should *take it*:¹⁶ †for it cannot be
 But I am *pigeon-liver'd*,¹⁷ and *lack gall*¹⁸
 To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
 I should have *fatted*¹⁹ all the *region kites*²⁰
 With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless,²¹ treacherous, lecherous, *kindless*²² 620
 villain!
 O, vengeance!
 Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,

¹i.e. the soul's
²turned pale (fac)

³faculty of
 action

⁴i.e. the actor's
 cue

⁵public ear

⁶innocent, free
 from guilt

⁷confound

⁸irresolute

⁹mope

¹⁰the dreamer

¹¹very person

¹²destruction

¹³head

¹⁴pulls

¹⁵this to me
 (dative)

¹⁶suffer it

¹⁷timid

¹⁸without

courage

¹⁹made fat

²⁰kites of the air

²¹pitiless

²²unnatural

* Mope like a dreamer, unquickened by any active thoughts relating to my cause.

† For it must be that I am none other than a coward and without that spirit which feels insult bitterly.

Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a *want'n*,¹ unpack my heart with
words,

And fall a-cursing, like a very *drab*,²

A *scullion*!³

Fie upon't! foh! *About*,⁴ my brain! I have heard

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul, that *presently*⁵

They have proclaim'd their *malefactions*,⁶

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With most miraculous *organ*.⁷ I'll have these

players

Play something like the murder of my father

Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;

I'll *tent*⁸ him to the quick: if he but *blench*,⁹

I know my course. The spirit that I have seen

May be the devil: and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps 640

*Out of*¹⁰ my weakness, and my melancholy,

As he is very potent with such spirits,

*Abuses*¹¹ me to damn me: I'll have *grounds*¹²

More *relative*¹³ than this: the play's the thing

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit*.

¹*wanton*

²*dirty woman*

³*kitchen wench*

⁴*get to work*

630

⁵*immediately*

⁶*evil deeds*

(five syl-
lables)

⁷*instrument*

⁸*probe*

⁹*start*

640

¹⁰*by means of*

¹¹*deceives*

¹²*reasons*

¹³*conclusive*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA,
ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no *drift of circum-*
stance,¹⁴

Get from him why he *puts on*¹⁵ this *confusion*,¹⁶

*Grating*¹⁷ so harshly all his days of quiet

With *turbulent*¹⁸ and dangerous lunacy?

Rosencrantz. He does confess he feels himself
distracted;

But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

¹⁴*roundabout*
method

¹⁵*assumes*

¹⁶*i.e. of mind*

¹⁷*disturbing*

¹⁸*restless*

<i>Guildestern.</i> Nor do we find him forward ¹ to be sounded;		¹ <i>willing</i>
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof, ²		² <i>(he) holds off</i>
When we would bring him on to some confession Of his true state.		
<i>Queen.</i> Did he receive you well?	10	
<i>Rosencrantz.</i> Most like a gentleman.		
<i>Guildestern.</i> But with much forcing ³ of his disposition. ⁴		³ <i>apparent unwillingness</i>
<i>Rosencrantz.</i> *Niggard of ⁵ question; but, of our demands,		⁴ <i>mood</i> ⁵ <i>stingy as regards</i>
Most free in his reply.		
<i>Queen.</i> Did you assay ⁶ him		⁶ <i>tempt</i>
To any pastime.		
<i>Rosencrantz.</i> Madam, it so fell ⁷ out, that certain players		⁷ <i>happened</i>
We o'er-raught ⁸ on the way; of these we told him:		⁸ <i>overtook</i>
And there did seem in him a kind of joy To hear of it: they are about the court;		
And, as I think, they have already order This night to play before him.	20	
<i>Polonius.</i> 'Tis most true:		
And he beseech'd ⁹ me to entreat your majesties To hear and see the matter.		⁹ <i>besought</i>
<i>King.</i> With all my heart; and it doth much content me		
To hear him so inclined.—		
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge, ¹⁰		¹⁰ <i>urging</i>
And drive his purpose on to these delights.		
<i>Rosencrantz.</i> We shall, my lord.		
<i>Exeunt</i> ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.		
<i>King.</i> Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;		
For we have closely ¹¹ sent for Hamlet hither, That he, as 'twere by accident, may here	30	¹¹ <i>secretly</i>
Affront ¹² Ophelia;		¹² <i>confront</i>
Her father and myself (lawful espials ¹³)		¹³ <i>spies</i>
Will so bestow ¹⁴ ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,		¹⁴ <i>place, conceal</i>

*We obtained very little of what we tried to draw out of him, but he was very ready in replying to our questions.

We may of their encounter *frankly*¹ judge;
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affection of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I *shall*² obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's *wildness*:³ so shall I hope your vir-
tues

Will bring him to his *wonted*⁴ way again,
To both your honours.⁵

Ophelia. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* QUEEN.]

Polonius. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious,
so please you,
We will *bestow*⁶ ourselves. [*To* OPHELIA] Read
*on*⁷ this book;

That show of such an exercise may *colour*⁸
Your *loneliness*.⁹ We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too *much*¹⁰ proved,—that with devotion's
visage,¹¹

And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. [*Aside.*] O, 'tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
O heavy burden!

Polonius. I hear him coming: let's with-
draw, my lord.

[*Exeunt* KING and POLONIUS.]

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. To be, or not to be,—that is the
question:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune,
*Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die,—to sleep,—
No more; and, by a sleep, to say we end

¹*freely*

²*will*

³*madness*

40

⁴*accustomed*

⁵*to the honor
of both of you*

⁶*hide*

⁷*in*

⁸*excuse*

⁹*being alone*

¹⁰*frequently*

¹¹*appearance of*

50

* "Take arms against a host of troubles which break in upon us like a sea."

The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation 60
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die,—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream:—ay, there's the
rub,¹

For in that sleep of death what dreams may
come,

*When we have shuffled off this *mortal coil*,²
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of
time,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's *con-*
tumely,³

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the *spurns*⁴ 70

That patient merit of the unworthy *takes*,⁵
When he himself might his *quietus make*⁶
With a bare *bodkin*?⁷ Who would *fardels*⁸ bear,

To *grunt*⁹ and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country, from whose *bourn*¹⁰

No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all; 80

†And thus the *native hue*¹¹ of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of *thought*,¹²

And enterprises of great *pith*¹³ and *moment*,¹⁴

With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—*Soft you*,¹⁵ now!

The fair Ophelia!—Nymph, in thy *orisons*¹⁶
Be all my sins remember'd.

Ophelia. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this *many a day*?¹⁷

Hamlet. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Ophelia. My lord, I have *remembrances*¹⁸ of
yours, 90

¹*hindrance*

²*turmoil of life*

³*insolence*

⁴*insults*

⁵*puts up with*

⁶*end his life*

⁷*dagger*

⁸*burdens*

⁹*groan*

¹⁰*boundary*

¹¹*natural color*

¹²*anxiety*

¹³*height*

¹⁴*importance*

¹⁵*hush*

¹⁶*prayers*

¹⁷*long time*

¹⁸*keepsakes*

* When we have put off this mortal body now coiled round the soul.

†.Resolution loses its natural color and becomes pale through anxiety.

That I have longed long to *re-deliver*;¹

I pray you, now receive them.

Hamlet. No, not I;

I never gave you *ought*.²

Ophelia. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;

And with them, words of so sweet breath composed,

As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,

Take these *again*;³ for to the noble mind,

Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

There, my lord.

Hamlet. Ha, ha! are you *honest*?⁴

Ophelia. My lord!

Hamlet. Are you fair?

Ophelia. What means your lordship?

Hamlet. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Ophelia. Could beauty, my lord, have better *commerce*⁵ than with *honesty*?⁶

Hamlet. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was *sometime*⁷ a paradox, but now the time *gives it proof*.⁸ I did love you once.

Ophelia. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Hamlet. You should not have believed me; *for virtue cannot so *inoculate*⁹ our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Ophelia. I was the more deceived.

Hamlet. Get thee to a nunnery: I am myself *in-different*¹⁰ honest; but yet I could accuse *me*¹¹ of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambi-

¹*give back*

²*anything*

³*i.e. back again*

⁴*virtuous*

⁵*intercourse*

⁶*virtue*

⁷*formerly*

⁸*proves it*

⁹*graft*

¹⁰*ordinarily*

¹¹*myself*

* Virtue cannot be so grafted on our nature as to remove all flavor of our natural badness.

tious; with more offences at my *beck*¹ than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are *arrant*² knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. 130
Where's your father?

¹*call*²*thorough*³*except*

Ophelia. At home, my lord.

Hamlet. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere *but*³ in's own house. Farewell.

Ophelia. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Hamlet. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry,—be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. 140
Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Ophelia. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Hamlet. I have heard of your paintings, too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: *you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your *wantonness*⁴ your ignorance. Go 150
to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say; we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but *one*⁵ shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.
[*Exit.*]

⁴*affectation*⁵*i.e. the king*

Ophelia. O, what a noble mind is here o'er-thrown!

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;

The *expectancy*⁶ and *rose*⁷ of the fair state,

†The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,

⁶*hope*
⁷*fairest flower*

* You give wrong names to God's creatures out of affectation, and pretend it is ignorance.

† Mirror of courtesy and model by whom all endeavored to form themselves.

The observed of¹ all observers, quite, quite down!

And I, of ladies most *deject*² and wretched, 160
That suck'd the honey of his *music*³ vows,
Now see that noble and most *sovereign*⁴ reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth

Blasted with *ecstasy*.⁵ O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!
Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
*Nor*⁶ what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was *not*⁶ like madness. There's something in his soul,

O'er which his melancholy sits *on brood*;⁷ 170
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the *disclose*,⁸
Will be some *danger*:⁹ which, for to *prevent*,¹⁰
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down: he shall with speed *to*¹¹ Eng-land,

For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With *variable*¹² objects, shall expel
This *something*¹³ settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains *still*¹⁴ beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you *on't*?¹⁵ 180

Polonius. It shall do well: but yet do I believe

The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be *round*¹⁶ with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, *in the ear*¹⁷
Of all their conference. If she *find him not*,¹⁸ 190

¹by

²*dejected*

³*musical*

⁴*supreme*

⁵*madness*

⁶double neg.

⁷*brooding*

⁸*revelation*

⁹*i.e. to me*

¹⁰*anticipate*

¹¹*(go) to*

¹²*various*

¹³*somewhat*

¹⁴*always*

¹⁵*of it*

¹⁶*plain-spoken*

¹⁷*within hearing*

¹⁸*i.e. his secret*

To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A *Hall in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET and certain Players.

Hamlet. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounce it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you *mouth*¹ it, as many of *your*² players do, I had as *liefe*³ the town-crier spoke my lines. *Nor*⁴ do *not*⁴ saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a *temperance*⁵ that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a *robustious*⁶ *periwig-pated*⁷ fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the *groundlings*⁸; who, for the most part, *are capable of*⁹ nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

¹ speak bombastically
² well-known
³ as soon
⁴ double negative

⁵ self-control
⁶ violent
⁷ wearing a wig
⁸ audience in the pit. See Glossary
⁹ can appreciate

10

20

1st Player. I warrant your honour.

Hamlet. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the *modesty*¹⁰ of nature: for anything so overdone is *from*¹¹ the purpose of playing; whose *end*¹², both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own *image*¹³, and *the very age and body of the time his form and *pressure*¹⁴. Now, this overdone, or *come tardy off*¹⁵, though it make the *unskilful*¹⁶ laugh,

¹⁰ moderation
¹¹ contrary
¹² purpose

¹³ likeness

¹⁴ character
¹⁵ fallen short of
¹⁶ ignorant

* The present age with its principal characteristics.

cannot but make the judicious grieve; the
*censure*¹ of the *which*² one must in your allow- 30
 ance o'erweigh a whole theatre of *others*.³ O,
 there be *players*⁴ that I have seen play, and
 heard others praise, and that highly, not to
 speak it profanely, that, neither having the
 accent of Christians, nor the *gait*⁵ of Christian,
 pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed,
 that I have thought some of nature's *journey-*
*men*⁶ had made men, and not made them well,
 they imitated humanity so abominably. 40

Ist Player. I hope we have reformed that
*indifferently*⁷ with us, sir.

Hamlet. O, reform it altogether. And let
 those that play your clowns speak no more than
 is set down for them; for there be *of*⁸ them that
 will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of
*barren*⁹ spectators to laugh too; though in the
 meantime some necessary question of the play be
 then to be considered: that's villainous, and
 shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that 50
 uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*]

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece
 of work?

Polonius. And the queen, too, and that
presently.¹⁰

Hamlet. Bid the players make haste.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

Will you two help to hasten them?

Rosencrantz. } We will, my lord.
Guildenstern. }

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Hamlet. What ho, Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Horatio. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Hamlet. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man 60
 As e'er my conversation *coped withal*.¹¹

Horatio. O, my dear lord,—

¹judgment

²i.e. the
 judicious

³i.e. the
 ignorant

⁴i.e. a class of
⁵walk

⁶workmen

⁷tolerably well

⁸certain of

⁹foolish

¹⁰immediately

¹¹encountered

Hamlet. Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what *advancement*¹ may I hope from thee,
That no *revenue*² hast, but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor
be flattered?

No, let the *candied tongue*³ lick absurd pomp;
And *crook*⁴ the *pregnant*⁵ hinges of the knee,
Where *thrift*⁶ may follow fawning. Dost thou
hear?

*Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of⁷ men distinguish,* her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, *in*⁸ *suffering*⁹ all, that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blessed are
those,

Whose *blood*¹⁰ and *judgment*¹¹ are so well com-
mingled,

That they are not a *pipe*¹² for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that
man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—

There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death:
I *pr'ythee*,¹³ when thou seest that act *a-foot*,¹⁴

Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his *occulted*¹⁵ guilt

Do not itself *unkennel*¹⁶ in one speech,

It is a damnèd ghost that we have seen;

And my imaginations are as foul

As Vulcan's *stithy*.¹⁷ Give him heedful note;

For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,

And, after, we will both our judgments join

¹*preferment*

²*revenue*

³*hypocrite*

⁴*bend*

⁵*ready*

⁶*gain*

70 ⁷*about*

⁸*in the act of*

⁹*cheerfully*
bearing

¹⁰*passion*

¹¹*reason*

¹²*flageolet*

80

¹³*pray thee*

¹⁴*being acted*

¹⁵*concealed*

¹⁶*disclose*

90

¹⁷*forge*

* Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, brought up with Hamlet, were the companions of his youth. Horatio was the intimate friend of maturer years, when he could distinguish the characters of men.

In censure¹ of his seeming.²

Horatio.

Well, my lord:

If he steal aught the whilst³ this play is playing,
And 'scape⁴ detecting, I will pay the theft.⁵

Hamlet. They are coming to the play; I
must be idle.⁶
Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING,
QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN-
CRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and other
Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying
torches.*

King. How fares⁷ our cousin Hamlet?

Hamlet. Excellent,⁸ i' faith; of the chameleon's
dish:⁹ I eat the air, promise-crammed: you can- 100
not feed capons so.

King. I have nothing¹⁰ with this answer,
Hamlet: these words are not mine.¹¹

Hamlet. No, nor mine now.—[To POLONIUS]
My lord, you played once in the university, you
say?

Polonius. That did I, my lord; and was ac-
counted a good actor.

Hamlet. And what¹² did you enact?¹³

Polonius. I did enact Julius Cæsar; I was 110
killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Hamlet. It was a brute part of him to kill so
capital a calf there.—Be the players¹⁴ ready?

Rosencrantz. Ay, my lord; they stay upon¹⁵
your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit
by me.

Hamlet. No, good mother, here's metal more
attractive. [Lying down at OPHELIA'S feet.]

Polonius. [To the KING] O, ho! do you mark 120
that?

Ophelia. You are merry, my lord.

Hamlet. Who, I?

Ophelia. Ay, my lord.

¹judgment

²behavior

³time (noun)

⁴escape

⁵what is stolen

⁶foolish

⁷does

⁸excellently

⁹on air

¹⁰no informa-
tion

¹¹do not refer to
me

¹²i.e. what part

¹³play

¹⁴company

¹⁵await

Hamlet. O God! your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died *within these two hours*.¹

Ophelia. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Hamlet. So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but, *by'r*² lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer *not thinking on*,³ with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Trumpet sounds. The dumb show enters.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loth and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Ophelia. What means this, my lord?

Hamlet. Marry, this is *micling mallecho*,⁴ it means mischief.

Ophelia. Belike⁵ this show⁶ imports the argument⁷ of the play.

¹less than two hours ago

130

²by our

³oblivion

140

⁴secret, insidious mischief

⁵perhaps

⁶dumb show

⁷theme, subject

Enter Prologue.

Hamlet. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep *counsel*,¹ they'll tell all.

Ophelia. Will he tell us what this show meant?

¹*a secret*

Prologue. For us and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency, 150
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit.*]

Hamlet. Is this a prologue, or the *posy*² of a ring?

²*poetical motto*

Ophelia. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Hamlet. As woman's love.

Enter Two Players, King and Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times had *Phæbus'*
*cart*³ gone round

³*chariot of the sun*

Neptune's *salt wash*,⁴ and Tellus' *orb*⁵ ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrowed *sheen*,⁶
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands, 160
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

⁴*the sea*⁵*round*⁶*light*

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun
and moon

Make us again count o'er, ere love be *done*!⁷

⁷*ended*

But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from *cheer*,⁸ and from your former state,
That I *distrust*⁹ you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it *nothing*¹⁰ must:

⁸*cheerfulness*⁹*am solicitous about*¹⁰*in no way*

*For women's fear and love hold quantity;

In neither aught, *or*¹¹ in extremity.

¹¹*nor*

Now, what my love is, proof hath made you 170
know;

And as my *love is sized*,¹² my fear is so:
Where love is great, the *littlest*¹³ doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows
there.

¹²*the size of my love*¹³*least*

P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too;

* "Women's fear and love vary together, are proportionable; they either contain nothing, or what they contain is in extremes"—(Abbott.)

My *operant*¹ powers their functions *leave*² to do:
 And thou shalt *live*³ in this fair world *behind*,³
 Honour'd, beloved; and, haply, one as kind
 For husband shalt thou——

¹*active*²*cease*³*survive me*

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
 Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
 In second husband let me be accurst! 180
 None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

Hamlet. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. Queen. The *instances*⁴ that second marriage move,

⁴*motives*

Are base *respects*⁵ of *thrift*,⁶ but none of love:

⁵*considerations*

P. King. I do believe you think what now
 you speak;

⁶*gain*

*But what we do determine, oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory;

Of violent birth, but poor *validity*:⁷

⁷*strength*

Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;

But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.

*Most necessary*⁸ 'tis, that we forget

190

⁸*unavoidable*

To pay ourselves what to ourselves is *debt*:⁹

⁹*due*

What to ourselves in passion we propose,

The passion ending, doth the purpose lose,

The violence of either grief or joy

Their own *enactures*¹⁰ *with*¹¹ themselves destroy:

¹⁰*resolutions*

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;

¹¹*of*

Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.

This world is not for *aye*,¹² *nor*¹³ 'tis *not*¹³ strange,

¹²*ever*¹³*double neg.*

That even our loves should with our fortunes
 change;

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove, 200

Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.

The great man down, you mark his favourite
 flies;

The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.

And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:

For who *not needs*¹⁴ shall never *lack*¹⁵ a friend;

¹⁴*has plenty*¹⁵*be without*

* Resolutions are suddenly formed, but are of little strength, and endure only as long as we remember them.

*And who in want a hollow friend doth *try*,¹
 Directly *seasons*² him his enemy.
 But, orderly to end where I *begun*,³
 Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
 That our devices *still*⁴ are overthrown; 210
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our
 own:

So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
 But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor
 heaven light!

Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
 To desperation turn my trust and hope!

An *anchor's*⁵ *cheer*⁶ in prison be my *scope*!⁷
 Each *opposite*⁸ that *blanks*⁹ the face of joy,
 Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
 Both here and hence, pursue me lasting strife, 220
 If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Hamlet. If she should break it now!

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave
 me here a while;

My spirits grow dull, and *fain*¹⁰ I would beguile
 The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*]

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
 And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Exit.*]

Hamlet. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much,
 methinks.

Hamlet. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the *argument*?¹¹ Is 230
 there no offence in't?

Hamlet. No, no, they do but jest, poison in
 jest; no offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Hamlet. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how! *Trop-*
*ically.*¹² This play is the *image*¹³ of a murder done
 in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife,

¹*tests*

²*ripens*

³*began*

⁴*ever, always*

⁵*hermit's*

⁶*food*

⁷*highest aim*

⁸*obstacle*

⁹*makes pale*

¹⁰*gladly*

¹¹*plot of the play*

¹²*figuratively*

¹³*likeness*

* If a needy man test a false friend by asking for assistance he will at once turn him (*ripen*) into an enemy.

Baptista: you shall see *anon*; ¹'tis a knavish piece of work: but what of that? Your majesty, and we that have *free* ²souls, it touches us not: let 240 the *galled jade* ³wince, our *withers* ⁴are *unwrung*. ⁵

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Ophelia. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Hamlet. *I could interpret between you and your *love*, ⁶if I could see the puppets dallying.

Ophelia. Still better, and worse.

Hamlet. Begin, murderer: *leave thy damnable faces*, ⁷and begin. Come: the croaking raven 250 doth bellow for revenge.

Lucianus. Thoughts black, hands *apt*, ⁸drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing:

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With *Hecate's* ⁹ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property

On *wholesome* ¹⁰life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*]

Hamlet. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is *extant*, ¹¹and written in very choice Italian. You 260 shall see *anon* ¹²how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Ophelia. The king rises.

Hamlet. What, frightened with false fire!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Polonius. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: away.

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all except HAMLET and HORATIO.*]

¹*in an instant*

²*innocent*
³*sore-backed horse*
⁴*shoulders*
⁵*sound*

⁶*lover*

⁷*cease looking round*

⁸*ready*

⁹*a dissyllable*

¹⁰*healthy*

¹¹*true*

¹²*immediately*

* Like the interpreter of the puppet show, I could put words into the mouths of yourself and your lover, if I saw the dolls working.

<i>Hamlet.</i> Why, let the <i>stricken deer</i> ¹ go weep, The <i>hart</i> ² <i>ungallèd</i> ³ play; For some must <i>watch</i> , ⁴ while some must sleep: So runs the world away. Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes <i>turn Turk</i> ⁵ with me), with two Provincial <i>roses</i> ⁶ on my <i>razed</i> ⁷ shoes, get me a fellowship in a <i>cry</i> ⁸ of players, sir?	270	¹ <i>Claudius</i> ² <i>Hamlet</i> ³ <i>uninjured</i> ⁴ <i>keep awake</i>
<i>Horatio.</i> Half a share.		⁵ <i>change for the worse</i> ⁶ <i>rosettes</i> ⁷ <i>slashed</i> ⁸ <i>company</i>
<i>Hamlet.</i> A whole one, I. For thou dost know, O Damon dear, This realm dismantled was Of <i>Jove himself</i> ; ⁹ and now reigns here A very, very— <i>Peacock</i> . ¹⁰	280	⁹ <i>Hamlet's father</i> ¹⁰ <i>Claudius</i>
<i>Horatio.</i> You might have rhymed.		
<i>Hamlet.</i> O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?		
<i>Horatio.</i> Very well, my lord.		
<i>Hamlet.</i> Upon the talk of the poisoning,—		
<i>Horatio.</i> I did very well note him.		
<i>Hamlet.</i> Ah, ha!—Come, some music! come, the <i>recorders</i> ! ¹¹	290	¹¹ <i>flageolets</i>
For if the king like not the comedy, Why, then, belike, he likes it not <i>perdy</i> . ¹²		¹² <i>par Dieu</i> (by God)
Come, some music!		
<i>Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.</i>		
<i>Guildenstern.</i> Good my lord, vouchsafe <i>me</i> ¹³ a word with you.		¹³ <i>dative</i>
<i>Hamlet.</i> Sir, a whole history.		
<i>Guildenstern.</i> The king, sir,—		
<i>Hamlet.</i> Ay, sir, what of him?		
<i>Guildenstern.</i> Is, in his retirement, <i>marvel-</i> <i>lous</i> ¹⁴ <i>distempered</i> . ¹⁵	300	¹⁴ <i>marvelously</i> ¹⁵ <i>out of sorts</i>
<i>Hamlet.</i> With drink, sir?		
<i>Guildenstern.</i> No, my lord, rather with <i>choler</i> . ¹⁶		¹⁶ <i>anger</i>

Hamlet. Your wisdom *should*¹ show itself more *richer*,² to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guildestern. Good my lord, put your discourse into some *frame*,³ and start not so wildly from my affair.

310

Hamlet. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guildestern. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Hamlet. You are welcome.

Guildestern. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a *wholesome*⁴ answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

320

Hamlet. Sir, I cannot.

Guildestern. What, my lord?

Hamlet. Make you a *wholesome*⁵ answer; my wit's *diseased*:⁶ but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,—

Rosencrantz. Then, thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into *amazement*⁷ and *admiration*.⁸

330

Hamlet. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no *sequel*⁹ at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Rosencrantz. She desires to speak with you in her *closet*,¹⁰ ere you go to bed.

Hamlet. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further *trade*¹¹ with us?

Rosencrantz. My lord, you once did love me.

340

Hamlet. So I do still, by these *pickers and stealers*.¹²

¹would²double comparative³order⁴sensible⁵sensible⁶a play on words⁷perturbation
⁸astonishment⁹consequence¹⁰private room¹¹business¹²hands. See
Note III. ii.
341

Rosencrantz. Good my lord, what is *your cause* of¹ distemper? You do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

¹*cause of your*

Hamlet. Sir, I lack advancement.

Rosencrantz. How can that be, when you have the *voice*² of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

²*promise*

Hamlet. Ay, sir, but "While the grass grows"—the proverb is something *musty*.³

³*stale*

Re-enter the Players, with recorders.

O, the recorders! let me see one.—To *withdraw*⁴ with you:—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a *toil*?⁵

⁴*step aside*

Guildenstern. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

⁵*net*

Hamlet. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this *pipe*?⁶

⁶*flageolet*

Guildenstern. My lord, I cannot.

360

Hamlet. I pray you.

Guildenstern. Believe me, I cannot.

Hamlet. I do beseech you.

Guildenstern. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Hamlet. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these *ventages*⁷ with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

⁷*air-holes*

Guildenstern. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

370

Hamlet. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little *organ*;⁸ yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am

⁸*instrument*

380

easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret¹ me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir.

Polonius. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and *presently*.²

Hamlet. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

Polonius. By the mass, and 'tis a camel, indeed.

Hamlet. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Polonius. It is *backed like*³ a weasel.

Hamlet. Or, like a whale?

Polonius. Very like a whale.

Hamlet. Then I will come to my mother *by and by*.⁴—They *fool*⁵ me to the *top*⁶ of my *bent*.⁷—I will come by and by.

Polonius. I will say so. [*Exit.*

Hamlet. "By and by" is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, HORATIO and Players.

'Tis now the very *witching time of night*,⁸
When churchyards *yawn*,⁹ and hell itself breathes
out

*Contagion*¹⁰ to this world: now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such *bitter business*¹¹ as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my
mother.

O heart, lose not thy *nature*,¹² let not ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak *daggers*¹³ to her, but use none;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;

How in my words soever she be *shent*,¹⁴

To *give them seals*¹⁵ never, my soul, consent!

[*Exit.*

¹*annoy*

²*immediately*

³*shaped like
the back of*

⁴*at once*

⁵*indulge*

⁶*height*

⁷*inclination*

⁸*midnight*

⁹*open wide*

¹⁰*pestilence*

¹¹*deeds of bitter
cruelty*

¹²*natural
affection*

¹³*cutting words*

¹⁴*reproached*

¹⁵*fulfil*

SCENE III.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us

To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;

I your commission will forthwith despatch,

And he to England shall *along*¹ with you:

The *terms of our estate*² may not endure

Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow

Out of his lunacies.

Guildenstern. We will *ourselves provide*,³

Most holy and religious fear it is,

To keep those many many bodies safe,

That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

10

Rosencrantz. The single and peculiar life is bound,

With all the strength and armour of the mind,

To keep itself from '*noyance*,'⁴ but much more

That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest

The lives of many. The *cease*⁵ of *majesty*⁶

Dies not alone; but, like a *gulf*,⁷ doth draw

What's near in with it: it is a *massy*⁸ wheel,

Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,

To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser

things

Are mortised and adjoin'd; *which*,⁹ when it falls

20

⁹of which

Each small annexment, petty consequence,

Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone

Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. *Arm you*,¹⁰ I pray you, *to*¹⁰ this *speedy*¹¹ voyage;

¹⁰prepare for¹¹immediate

For we will fetters put upon this fear,

Which now goes too *free-footed*.¹²

¹²unrestrained

Rosencrantz. } We will haste us.
Guildenstern. }

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

¹(go) along²position as king³get ready⁴annoyance, injury⁵decease⁶of a king⁷whirlpool⁸massive

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:¹
Behind the arras² I'll convey myself,
To hear the process;³ I'll warrant she'll tax him
home: 30

And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a
mother,
Since nature makes them⁴ partial, should o'er-
hear

The speech, of⁵ vantage.⁶ Fare you well, my
liege:

I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder! Pray, can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will: 40

My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;⁷
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand *in pause*⁸ where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. *What if*⁹ this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? *Whereto serves*¹⁰ mercy

*But to confront the visage of offence?

†And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled,¹¹ ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul
murder?"

That cannot be; since I am still possess'd

¹private room

²tapestry

³account

⁴mothers

⁵from

⁶advantage

⁷intention

⁸hesitating

⁹even suppos-
ing that

¹⁰of what avail
is

50 ¹¹anticipated

* To meet sin face to face and to overcome it.

† The two occasions of prayer: (1) before the sin, *i. e.*, "Lead us not into temptation;" (2) after sinning—a prayer for pardon.

Of those *effects*¹ for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
 May one be pardon'd, and retain the *offence*?²
 In the corrupted currents of this world
 *Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
 And oft 'tis seen, the *wicked*³ prize itself 60
 Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In *his*⁴ true nature; and we ourselves *compell*'d,⁵
 †Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 To give in evidence. What then? what *rests*?⁶
 Try what repentance can: what can it not?
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
 O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
 O *limed*⁷ soul, that, struggling to be free,
 Art more *engaged*!⁸ Help, angels! make *assay*:⁹ 70
 Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart, with strings
 of steel,
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
 All may be well. [Retires and kneels.

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. Now might I do it pat, *now*¹⁰ he is
 praying;
 And now I'll do't:—and so he goes to heaven;
 And so am I revenged:—that *would*¹¹ be *scann'd*¹²:—
 A villain kills my father; and, for that,
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send
 To heaven.
 O, this is hire and salary, not revenge. 80
 †He took my father grossly, full of bread;
 With all his crimes broad blown, as *flush*¹³ as
 May:
 And how his *audit*¹⁴ stands, who knows, save
 heaven?

¹*advantages*

²*what was
gained by
the offence*

60 ³*obtained by
wickedness*

⁴*its*
⁵*(are) com-
pelled*
⁶*remains*

70 ⁷*captured*
⁸*bound*
⁹*attempt*

¹⁰*while*

¹¹*must*
¹²*inquired into*

80 ¹³*full blown*

¹⁴*final account*

* A wealthy offender may bribe the judge (*buys out the law*) and thus put justice aside, for often the prize gained by the crime (*wicked prize*) is so valuable as to be worth a considerable expenditure in bribes.

† Straight in the face of our offences; there can be no evasion.

† He murdered my father in the midst of indulgence, unpurified by fasting, and with sins unrepented.

But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis *heavy*¹ with him: *and am I, then, revenged,
*To take*² him *in*³ the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and *season'd*⁴ for his *passage*?⁵
No!

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid *hent*:⁶
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then *trip him*,⁷ that his heels may kick at
heaven,

And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother *stays*:⁸
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*]

The KING rises and advances.

King. †My words fly up, my thoughts remain
below:

Words without thoughts never to heaven go.
[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Queen's Room.*

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

Polonius. He will come *straight*.⁹ Look, you
lay home to him:
Tell him his pranks have been too *broad*¹⁰ to bear
with,
And that your grace hath screened and stood
between

Much *heat*¹¹ and him. I'll silence me *e'en*¹² here.
Pray you, be *round*¹³ with him.

Hamlet. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I'll warrant you;

Fear me not:—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides behind the arras.*]

¹a heavy
reckoning
²were I to take
³in the act of
⁴prepared
⁵i.e. from life
to death
⁶opportunity

90

⁷trip him up

⁸is waiting

⁹immediately

¹⁰free

¹¹king's anger
¹²even
¹³ outspoken

* The fact that I found you at prayer saves your life for a time.

† I pray to heaven for pardon, whilst my thoughts are how to compass Hamlet's death. Prayers that are not the expression of the soul's desire can never reach heaven.

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Hamlet. Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle¹ tongue.

Hamlet. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Hamlet. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Hamlet. No, by the rood,² not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife:
And—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Hamlet. Come, come, and sit you down;
you shall not budge;³

You go not, till I set you up a glass⁴
Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Polonius. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help! help! help!

Hamlet. How now! a rat?⁵ [*Draws.*] Dead,
for a ducat, dead! ^{*spy*}

[*Makes a pass through the arras.*]

Polonius. [*Behind.*] O, I am slain!

[*Falls and dies.*]

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Hamlet. Nay, I know not: is it the king?

[*Lifts up the arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.*]

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Hamlet. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Hamlet. Ay, lady, 'twas my word. 30
[*To POLONIUS.*] Thou wretched, rash, intruding
fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy *better*:¹ take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be *too busy*² is *some danger*.³—
*Leave*⁴ wringing of your hands: peace! sit you
down,

And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against *sense*.⁵

Queen. What have I done, that thou darest
wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Hamlet. Such an act, 40
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an *innocent*⁶ love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as *dicers*'⁷ oaths: O, such a deed,
As from the body of *contraction*⁸ plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: *heaven's face doth *glow*;⁹
Yea, this *solidity and compound mass*,¹⁰
With tristful visage, as *against*¹¹ the *doom*,¹² 50
Is thought-sick at the *act*.¹³

Queen. Ah me, what *act*,¹⁴
That roars so loud, and thunders in the *index*?¹⁵
Hamlet. Look here, upon this picture, and
on this,

The *counterfeit presentment*¹⁶ of two brothers,
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A *station*¹⁷ like the herald Mercury,
*New-lighted*¹⁸ on a *heaven-kissing*¹⁹ hill;

¹*the king*
²*officious*
³*dangerous*
⁴*cease*

⁵*feeling*

⁶*two syllables*

⁷*gamblers'*

⁸*marriage con-
tract*

⁹*blush*

¹⁰*the earth*

¹¹*before*

¹²*doomsday*

¹³*deed*

¹⁴*play or drama*

¹⁵*prologue*

¹⁶*picture*

¹⁷*attitude*

¹⁸*just alighted*

¹⁹*lofty*

* Heaven blushes at you; yea, the solid mass of earth, with sorrowful appearance, if before the day of judgment, is sick with anxiety.

A combination, and a form, indeed, 60
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,
 To give the world assurance of a man:
 This was your husband. Look you now, what
 follows:
 Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his *wholesome*¹ brother. Have you
 eyes?
 Could you on this fair mountain *leave*² to feed,
 And *batten*³ on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
 You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
 The *hey-day*⁴ in the blood is tame, it's humble,
 And waits upon the judgment: and what judg-
 ment 70
 Would step from this to this? *Sense, sure, you
 have,
 Else could you not have *motion*:⁵ but, sure, that
 sense
 Is *apoplex'd*:⁶ for madness would not err;
 Nor⁷ sense to *ecstasy*⁸ was ne'er⁷ so *thrall'd*⁹
 But it reserved some *quantity*¹⁰ of choice,
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
 That thus hath *cozen'd*¹¹ you at *hoodman-blind*?¹²
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling *sans*¹³ all,
 †Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80
 Could not so *mope*.¹⁴
 O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst *mutine*¹⁵ in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
 And reason panders will.

¹healthy²cease³grow fat⁴passion⁵emotion⁶affected with
apoplexy⁷double neg.⁸madness⁹enslaved¹⁰portion¹¹cheated¹²blind man's

buff

¹³without¹⁴be so stupid¹⁵mutiny
two syllables

* You must have the power of feeling, or you could not have emotion; but your senses must be paralyzed: for a madman would not make such a mistake; for his senses are never so much the slave of his madness as not to retain some power of choice, so as to distinguish a contrast so marked as in these two pictures.

† If any one of your senses had even the slightest portion remaining.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more.
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained¹ spots
As will not leave their tinct.²

90 ¹dyled in grain
²dye, color

Hamlet. Nay, but to live
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty,—

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words, like daggers, enter in³ mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!

³into

Hamlet. A murderer and a villain;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe⁴
Of your precedent⁵ lord: a Vice⁶ of kings;
A cutpurse⁷ of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

⁴tenth
⁵former
⁶clown
⁷thief

Queen. No more! 100

Hamlet. A king of shreds and patches,—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your gra-
cious figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad!

Hamlet. Do you not come your tardy⁸ son to
chide,

⁸dilatory

*That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important⁹ acting¹⁰ of your dread command?
O, say!

⁹urgent
¹⁰performance

Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation¹¹
Is but to whet¹² thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement¹³ on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit¹⁴ in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.

110 ¹¹visit
¹²sharpen
¹³perturbation

¹⁴imagination
or conscience

Hamlet. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,

*Who, given up to delay and sentiment, neglects to obey your awful command. which calls for instant action.

And with the *incorporal*¹ air do hold discourse?
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
 And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
 *Your *bedded*² hair, like life in *excrements*,³
 Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
 Upon the heat and flame of thy *distemper*⁴
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look? 120

¹*incorporeal or immaterial*

²*lying flat*
³*excrescences*
⁴*disorder*

Hamlet. On him, on him! Look you, how
 pale he glares!

†His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to
 stones,

Would make them *capable*.⁵—Do not look upon
 me,

⁵*sc. of feeling*

‡Lest with this piteous action you convert
 My stern effects: then, what have I to do
 Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for
 blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Hamlet. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see. 130

Hamlet. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Hamlet. Why look you there! look, how it
steals away!⁶

⁶*gradually vanishes*

My father, in his habit as⁷ he lived!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the
portal!⁸ [*Exit Ghost.*]

⁷*as when*

⁸*door*

Queen. This is the very *coinage*⁹ of your
 brain:

⁹*invention*

This bodiless creation *ecstasy*¹⁰

¹⁰*madness*

Is very cunning in.

Hamlet. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
 And makes as healthful music; it is not madness

* Your hair, lying flat, starts up and stands on end, as if life were suddenly infused into a mere excretion.

† His appearance, together with the cause of it, would put some sense and feeling even into stones.

‡ Lest by your appeal for pity you turn me away from the accomplishment of my stern resolve.

That I have utter'd: bring me to the test, 140
 And I the matter will *re-word*;¹ which madness
 Would *gambol*² from. Mother, for love of grace,
 Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
 That not your trespass but my madness speaks:
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
 Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen.³ Confess yourself to heaven:
 Repent what's past; avoid *what is to come*;⁴
 And do not spread the *compost*⁵ on the weeds,
 To make them *ranker*.⁶ Forgive me this my
 virtue; 150

For in the fatness of these *pursy*⁷ times
 Virtue itself of Vice must pardon beg,
 Yea, *curb and woo*,⁸ for *leave*⁹ to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart
 in twain.

Hamlet. O, throw away the *worser*¹⁰ part of it.
 And live the purer with the other half.
 Good night:

Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
 That monster, Custom, who all sense doth eat,
 Of habits devil, is angel yet in this, 160
 That to the use of actions fair and good
 He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
 That aptly is put on.

For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
 *And master the devil, or throw him out
 With wondrous potency. Once more, good night;
 And when you are desirous to be blessed,
 I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
 [Pointing to POLONIUS.

I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
 †To punish me with this, and this with me, 170
 That I must be *their*¹¹ scourge and *minister*.¹²
 I will *bestow*¹³ him, and will *answer*¹⁴ well
 The death I gave him. So, again, good night.

¹repeat in the
 same words
²skip away

³corrupts or
 festers

⁴future sin

⁵manure

⁶of stronger
 growth

⁷short-winded

⁸bow and beg

⁹permission

¹⁰double com-
 parative

¹¹of heaven

¹²servant

¹³stow away

¹⁴account for

* Either master the devil once for all, or beat back his attacks.

† To punish me (Hamlet) by causing me to kill Polonius, and to punish him by making me the instrument of his death.

I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One word¹ more, good lady.

Queen.

What shall I do?

Hamlet. Not this, by no means, that I bid
you do:

Let the *bloat*² king tempt you,
Make you to *ravel*³ all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere *good*,⁴ you let him
know:

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a *paddock*,⁵ from a bat, a *gib*,⁶
Such dear *concernings*⁷ hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
*Unpeg*⁸ the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try *conclusions*,⁹ in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made
of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Hamlet. I must to¹⁰ England; you know that?

Queen.

Alack,

I had forgot:¹¹ 'tis so *concluded on*.¹²

Hamlet. There's letters sealed: and my two
school-fellows,—

Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,—
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my
way,

And *marshal*¹³ me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the *sport*,¹⁴ to have the engineer
Hoist with his own *petard*.¹⁵ and 't shall go hard
But I will *delve*¹⁶ one yard below their mines,
And blow them *at*¹⁷ the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
*When in one line two crafts directly meet.
Mother, good night. Indeed, this counsellor

¹dissyllable

²bloated

³disentangle

⁴well

⁵load

⁶old tomcat

⁷concerns

⁸unfasten

⁹the result

190

¹⁰(go) to

¹¹forgotten

¹²decided

¹³lead

¹⁴policy

¹⁵mortar

¹⁶dig

¹⁷up to

180

200

* When two crafty persons meet in direct collision.

Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
 Who was in life a foolish *prating*¹ knave.
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end² with you.
 Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally, HAMLET dragging
 the body of POLONIUS.*]

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*The same.*

*Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and
 GUILDENSTERN.*

King. There's matter in these sighs, these
 profound heaves:
 You must *translate*:³ 'tis fit we understand them:
 Where is your son?

Queen. [*To ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]
*Bestow this place on us*⁴ a little while.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both
 contend

*Which*⁵ is the mightier: in his lawless fit,
 Behind the *arras*⁶ hearing something stir,
 Whips out his rapier, cries "A rat, a rat!"
 And, in his *brainish apprehension*,⁷ kills
 The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy⁸ deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:

His *liberty*⁹ is full of *threats*¹⁰ to all;

To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?

It will be laid to us, whose *providence*¹¹

Should have kept *short*,¹² restrain'd, and out of
 haunt,

This mad young man: but so much was our
 love,

¹*chattering*

²*to finish off*

³*explain their
 meaning*

⁴*leave us alone*

⁵*as to which*

⁶*tapestry*

⁷*imaginary
 fear*

⁸*sorrowful*

⁹*being at large*
¹⁰*danger*

¹¹*foresight*

¹²*controlled*

10

We would not understand what was most fit; 20
 But, like the owner of a foul disease,
 To keep it from *divulging*,¹ let it feed
 Even on the *pith of life*.² Where is he gone?

Queen. To *draw apart*³ the body he hath
 kill'd:

O'er whom his very madness, *like some ore
 Among a mineral of metals base,
 Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!

The sun no sooner shall the mountains *touch*⁴
 But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed 30
 We must, with all our majesty and skill,
 Both *countenance*⁵ and excuse.—Ho, Guilden-
 stern!

[*Re-enter* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further *aid*.⁶
 Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
 And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd
 him:

Go seek him out; speak *fair*,⁷ and bring the
 body
 Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Come, Gertrude, we'll *call up*⁸ our wisest friends;
 And let them know, both what we mean to do,
 And what's *untimely*⁹ done: so, haply, slander, 40
 Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
 As *level*¹⁰ as the cannon to his *blank*¹¹
 Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our
 name,

And hit the *woundless*¹² air.—O, come away!
 My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt*.

¹*revealing itself*

²*vital parts*

³*put away*

⁴*i.e. at dawn*

⁵*support*

⁶*assistance*

⁷*gently*

⁸*summon*

⁹*unfortunately*

¹⁰*direct*

¹¹*its mark*

¹²*invulnerable*

* Like a vein of precious metal in a mine (or mass of) common metals.

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Castle.**Enter HAMLET.**Hamlet.* Safely stowed.¹¹*i.e. away**Rosencrantz.* } [*Within.*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!*Guildenstern.* }*Hamlet.* What noise? Who calls on Hamlet?
O! here they come.[*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.**Rosencrantz.* What have you done, my lord,
with the dead body?*Hamlet.* Compounded² it with dust, whereto
'tis kin.²*mingled**Rosencrantz.* Tell us where 'tis: that we may
take it thence,

And bear it to the chapel.

Hamlet. Do not believe it.*Rosencrantz.* Believe what?

10

Hamlet. That I can keep your *counsel*,³ and
not mine own. Besides, to be *demand'd of*⁴ a
sponge!—what *replication*⁵ should be made by
the son of a king?³*secret*⁴*questioned by*⁵*reply**Rosencrantz.* Take you me for a sponge, my
lord?*Hamlet.* Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's
countenance,⁶ his rewards, his *authorities*.⁷ But
such officers do the king best service in the end:
he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the cor-
ner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swal-
lowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it
is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be
dry again.⁶*favor*⁷*offices of*
authority

20

Rosencrantz. I understand you not, my lord.*Hamlet.* I am glad of it: a knavish speech
sleeps in a foolish ear.*Rosencrantz.* My lord, you must tell us
where the body is, and go with us to the king.*Hamlet.* The body is with the king, but the
king is not with the body. The king is a thing— 30

Guildestern. A thing, my lord!

Hamlet. Of *nothing*:¹ bring me to him. Hide
fox, and all after. [Exeunt.

¹*no value*

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

Enter KING, attended.

King. I have sent to seek *him*,² and to find
the body.

²*Hamlet*

How dangerous is it, that this man goes *loose*!³

³*free, unre-
strained*

Yet must not we put the strong law on him:

He's loved of the *distracted*⁴ multitude,

⁴*senseless*

Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;

*And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is
weigh'd,

But never the offence. To bear all smooth and
even,

This sudden sending him away must seem

Deliberate pause.⁵ †Diseases, desperate grown,

⁵*a well-con-
sidered plan*

By desperate appliance are relieved,

10

Or not at all.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

How now! what hath befall'n?

Rosencrantz. Where the dead body is be-
stow'd,⁶ my lord,

⁶*stowed away*

We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Rosencrantz. Without, my lord; guarded, to
know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Rosencrantz. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my
lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Hamlet. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

* They notice the punishment awarded to the offender, but lose sight of
the gravity of the offense.

† Desperate diseases need desperate remedies.

Hamlet. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain *convocation*¹ of politic worms are *e'en*² at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we *fat*³ all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for *maggots*:⁴ your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but *variable*⁵ service; two dishes, but to one table: that's the *end*.⁶

King. Alas, alas!

Hamlet. A man may fish with the worm that hath *eat*⁷ of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Hamlet. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Hamlet. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him *i' the other place*⁸ yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall *nose*⁹ him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. [*To some Attendants.*] Go seek him there.

Hamlet. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—

Which we do *tender*,¹⁰ as we *dearly*¹¹ grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee
hence

With fiery quickness.¹² therefore prepare thyself;

The bark is ready, and the wind *at help*,¹³
The *associates tend*,¹⁴ and everything is bent
For England.

Hamlet. For England!

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Hamlet. Good. 50

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

¹assembly

²just now

³fatten

⁴i.e. to feed

on us

⁵various

⁶i.e. of us all

⁷eaten

⁸i.e. hell

⁹smell

¹⁰hold precious

¹¹heartily

¹²in hot haste

¹³favorable

¹⁴companions
wait

Hamlet. I see a cherub that sees them. But come; for England! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Hamlet. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so my mother. Come, for England! *[Exit.]*

King. Follow him *at foot*;¹ tempt him with speed abroad;

Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night: Away! for everything is seal'd and done,
That else *leans*² on the affair: pray you, make haste.

60

¹*closely, at his heels*

²*depends*

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st *at aught*,³
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy *cicatrice*⁴ looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy *free*⁵ awe
Pays homage to us,) thou mayst not *coldly set*⁶
Our sovereign *process*;⁷ which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The *present*⁸ death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the *hectic*⁹ in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps,¹⁰ my joys were ne'er begun.
[Exit.]

³*of any value*

⁴*scar of a wound*

⁵*unforced*

⁶*disregard*

⁷*procedure*

⁸*immediate*

⁹*fever*

¹⁰*whatever happens*

70

SCENE IV.—A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS and forces, marching.

Fortinbras. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;

Tell him that, by his *license*,¹¹ Fortinbras
Claims the *conveyance*¹² of a promised march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.

*If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his *eye*,¹³
And let him know so.

¹¹*permission*

¹²*conduct*

¹³*presence*

* If the king desires to see me, I will go and pay my respects to him in person.

Captain. I will do't, my lord.

Fortinbras. Go softly¹ on.

[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and forces.*]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
etc.

Hamlet. Good sir, whose powers² are these?

Captain. They are of Norway,³ sir.

Hamlet. How purposed, sir, 10

I pray you?

Captain. Against some part of Poland.

Hamlet. Who

Commands them, sir?

Captain. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Hamlet. Goes it against the main of Poland,
sir,

Or for some frontier?

Captain. Truly to speak, and with no
addition,⁴

We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.

*To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;

Nor will it yield to Norway,⁵ or the Pole,⁵

A ranker rate,⁶ should it be sold in fee.⁷

Hamlet. Why, then the Polack⁸ never will
defend it.

Captain. Yes, 'tis already garrisoned.

Hamlet. Two thousand souls, and twenty
thousand ducats,

Will not debate⁹ the question of this straw:

This is the imposthume¹⁰ of much wealth and
peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

Captain. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*]

Rosencrantz. Will't please you go, my lord?

¹slowly

²forces

³the king

⁴exaggeration

20

⁵the king

⁶greater income

⁷absolutely

⁸king of
Poland

⁹settle

¹⁰abscess

* "I would not cultivate (*farm*) it on the condition of paying only five ducats rental" or "I would not pay five ducats for the right of collecting (*farming*) its revenues."

<i>Hamlet.</i> I'll be with you <i>straight</i> . ¹ Go a little before.		¹ <i>immediately</i>
[<i>Exeunt all except HAMLET.</i>	30	
How all occasions do inform against me, And spur my dull revenge! What is a man, *If his chief good and market of his time, Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more. Sure, He that made us with such large discourse, Looking before and after, gave us not That capability and god-like reason To <i>fast</i> ² in us unused. Now <i>whether</i> ³ it be Bestial oblivion, or some <i>craven</i> ⁴ scruple Of thinking too precisely on the event,	40	² <i>grow mouldy</i> ³ <i>one syllable</i> ⁴ <i>cowardly</i>
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom, And ever three parts coward, I do not know Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to <i>do</i> ;" ⁵ <i>Sith</i> ⁶ I have cause, and will, and strength, and means, To do't. Examples, <i>gross</i> ⁷ as earth, exhort me: Witness this army, of such <i>mass</i> ⁸ and <i>charge</i> , ⁹ Led by a delicate and tender prince; Whose spirit, with divine ambition <i>puff</i> 'd, ¹⁰ <i>Makes mouths</i> ¹¹ at the <i>invisible</i> ¹² event; Exposing what is mortal, and <i>unsure</i> , ¹³	50	⁵ <i>be done</i> ⁶ <i>since</i> ⁷ <i>large, con- spicuous</i> ⁸ <i>numbers</i> ⁹ <i>expense</i> ¹⁰ <i>inspired</i> ¹¹ <i>mocks</i> ¹² <i>unforeseen</i> ¹³ <i>insecure</i>
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare, Even for an <i>egg-shell</i> . ¹⁴ Rightly to be great Is not to stir without great <i>argument</i> , ¹⁵ But greatly to find quarrel in a straw When honour's at the stake. How stand I, then, That have a father kill'd, a mother <i>stain</i> 'd, ¹⁶ †Excitements of my reason and my <i>blood</i> , ¹⁷ And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see The <i>imminent</i> ¹⁸ death of twenty thousand men, That, for a <i>fantasy and trick of fame</i> , ¹⁹	60	¹⁴ <i>a trifle</i> ¹⁵ <i>object of quarrel</i> ¹⁶ <i>dishonored</i> ¹⁷ <i>passion</i> ¹⁸ <i>impending</i> ¹⁹ <i>imaginary point of honor</i>
Go to their graves like beds; †fight for a <i>plot</i> ²⁰		²⁰ <i>of ground</i>

* His principal aim, and "that for which he sells his time" (Johnson); or "market" may mean "the employment" of his time.

† "Provocations which excite both my reason and passion to vengeance" (Johnson).

‡ Contend about a plot of ground not large enough to hold the contestants whilst fighting, and not sufficiently capacious to contain the slain when buried.

Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough, and *continent*,¹
To hide the slain? O,² from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!
[Exit.

SCENE V.—*Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.*

Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Horatio. She is importunate; indeed, *distracted*,³

Her mood *will needs be pitied*.⁴

Queen. What would she have?

Horatio. She speaks much of her father; says
she hears

There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats
her heart;

*Spurns*⁵ *enviously*⁶ at straws; speaks things in
doubt,

That carry but half sense; her speech is nothing,

*Yet the unshaped use of it doth move

The hearers to *collection*; ⁷they *aim*⁸ at it,

And *botch*⁹ the words up fit to their own thoughts; 10

Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures
yield them,

†Indeed would make one think there might be
thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Queen. 'Twere good *she were*¹⁰ spoken with,
for she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Let her come in.—

[Exit HORATIO.

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

Each *toy*¹¹ seems *prologue*¹² to some great *amiss*; ¹³

So full of *artless*¹⁴ *jealousy*¹⁵ is guilt,

It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

¹*receptacle*

²two syllables

³*distracted*

⁴*calls for pity*

⁵*kicks*

⁶*spitefully*

⁷*inference*

⁸*guess*

⁹*to bungle*

¹⁰scan as if one
word

¹¹*trifle*

¹²*prelude*

¹³*disaster*

¹⁴*ignorant*

¹⁵*suspicion*

* Listeners attempt to draw some inference from her disjointed speech.

† One cannot help thinking that she is brooding over something she is not quite sure about, which fills her with unhappy thoughts.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA.

Ophelia. Where is the beauteous majesty¹ of Denmark?

¹queen

Queen. How now, *Ophelia*!

Ophelia. [*Singing.*]

How should I your true love know²
From another one?

²distinguish

By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.³

³shoes

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Ophelia. Say you?⁴ nay, pray you, mark.

⁴what is it you say?

[*Singing.*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

30

Oh, oh!

Queen. Nay, but, *Ophelia*,—

Ophelia. Pray you, mark.

[*Singing.*] White his shroud⁵ as the mountain
snow,—

⁵winding sheet

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Ophelia. [*Singing.*]

Larded⁶ with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers.

⁶dressed

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Ophelia. Well, God 'ield⁷ you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

40

⁷yield (in its old sense "reward")

King. Conceit⁸ upon her father.

⁸thinking

Ophelia. Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Singing.*]

To-morrow is *Saint Valentine's day*,¹
 All in the morning *betime*,²
 And I a maid at your window,
 To be your Valentine.

50

¹*Feb. 14*²*early*

King. How long hath she been thus?

Ophelia. I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot *choose but weep*,³ to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good counsel.—Come, *my coach!*⁴ Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*

60

³*refrain from weeping*⁴*my carriage.*
see Note IV.
v. 58

King. Follow her *close*; ⁵*give her good watch*,⁶
 I pray you. [*Exit HORATIO.*

O, *this is*⁷ the poison of deep grief; it springs
 All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,

⁵*closely*
⁶*watch her carefully*
⁷*scan as if one word*

*When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
 But in battalions. First, her father slain:
 Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
 Of his own just *remove*:⁸ the people *muddled*,⁹
 Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and
 whispers,

⁸*removal*
⁹*unsettled*

*For*¹⁰ good Polonius' death; and we have done
 but *greenly*,¹¹

¹⁰*on account of*

*In hugger-mugger*¹² to inter him: poor Ophelia
 Divided from herself and her *fair judgment*,¹³
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere
 beasts:

¹¹*foolishly*¹²*secretly*¹³*reason*

Last, and as *much containing*¹⁴ as all these,
 Her brother is in secret come from France;
 Feeds on his wonder, keeps *himself in clouds*,¹⁵
 †And wants not *buzzers*¹⁶ to infect his ear

¹⁴*important*¹⁵*his purpose hidden*¹⁶*tale-bearers*

* Misfortunes never come singly.

† And is not without whisperers who poison his ear with pestilent account of his father's death, and having no sure knowledge, they are driven to stick at nothing in accusing me of the murder to everybody.

With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
 Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
 Will nothing stick *our person to arraign*¹
*In ear and ear.*² O my dear Gertrude, this,
 Like to a *murdering-piece*,³ in many places
 Gives me *superfluous death*.⁴ [A noise within.
 Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

80

¹*to accuse me*
²*to everybody*
³*cannon*
⁴*more deaths*
than one

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Where are my *Switzers*?⁵ Let them
 guard the door.
 What is the matter?

⁵*Swiss. See*
Note, IV. v.
 83

Gentleman. Save yourself, my lord:
 *The ocean, *overpeering of his list*,⁶
 Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
 Than young Laertes, in a *riotous head*,⁷
 O'erbears your *officers*.⁸ The rabble call him
 lord;

⁶*rising over its*
boundary
⁷*force of riotous*
citizens
⁸*one syllable*

And, as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every word,⁹
 They cry, "Choose we; Laertes shall be king!"
 Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the
 clouds,

90

⁹*proposal*

"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they
 cry!

O, this is *counter*,¹⁰ you false Danish dogs!

¹⁰*false trail*

King. The doors are broke.¹¹ [Noise within.

¹¹*broken in*

Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.

Laertes. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you
 all without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laertes. I pray you, give me leave.¹²

¹²*i. e. to enter*
alone

* The ocean swelling over its boundary eats away the flat country.

Danes. We will, we will. 100

[*They retire without the door.*]

Laertes. I thank you:—*keep*¹ the door.—O ¹*guard*

thou vile king,

Give me my father!

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,

That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?

Let him go, Gertrude; do not *fear*² our person: ²*fear for*

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

*That treason can but peep *to*³ what it would, ³*in comparison*

Acts little of *his*⁴ will. Tell me, Laertes, ⁴*its*

Why thou art thus incensed: let him go, Gertrude;

Speak, man. 110

Laertes. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laertes. How came he *dead*?⁵ I'll not be ⁵*to die*

juggled with!

To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!

I dare damnation: to this point I stand,—

That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged

Most *thoroughly*⁶ for my father. ⁶*thoroughly*

King. Who shall stay you?

Laertes. My will, not all the world: 120

And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,

They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty

Of your dear father's death, is't *writ*⁷ in your ⁷*written*

revenge,

That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and

foe,

Winner and loser?

* Treason can do nothing more than peep in comparison with what it desires to do, and so compasses but little of its purpose.

Laertes. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them, then?

Laertes. To his good friends thus wide I'll
*ope*¹ my arms;

And, like the kind *life-rendering*² pelican,
*Repast*³ them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak 130

Like a *good child*,⁴ and a true gentleman.
 That I am guiltless of your father's death,
 And am most *sensibly*⁵ in grief for it,
 It shall as *level*⁶ to your judgment pierce,
 As day does to your eye.

Danes. [Within.] Let her come in.

Laertes. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
 Burn out the *sense*⁷ and *virtue*⁸ of mine eye!
 By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
 Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May! 140
 Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
 O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
 Nature is *fine*⁹ in love; and, where 'tis fine,
 It sends some precious *instance*¹⁰ of itself
 After the thing it loves.

Ophelia. [Singing.]

They bore him *barefaced*¹¹ on the bier;

Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:

And in his grave rain'd many a tear,—

Fare you well, *my dove*!¹² 150

Laertes. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst *per-*
*suade*¹³ revenge,

It could not move *thus*.¹⁴

Ophelia. You must sing a-down a-down and
 you call him a-down-a. O, how the wheel be-
 comes it! It is the false steward, that stole his
 master's daughter.

Laertes. This nothing's more than *matter*.¹⁵

¹*open*

²*giving up her
 own life.* See
 Note, IV. v.
 129

³*feed*

⁴*dutiful son*

⁵*feelingly*

⁶*directly*

⁷*feeling*

⁸*power (of
 sight)*

⁹*pure, refined*

¹⁰*sample*

¹¹*face uncovered*

¹²*i.e. Laertes*

¹³*urge me on to*

¹⁴*(me) as
 strongly*

¹⁵*words only,
 no sense*

Ophelia. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies; that's for thoughts.

160

Laertes. A document¹ in madness—thoughts and remembrance fitted.

¹lesson

Ophelia. There's fennel for *you*,² and columbines:—there's rue for *you*;³ and here's some for me: we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays:—O, *you*⁴ may wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy:—I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died:—they say he made a good end,—

²the king³the queen⁴the queen

[*Singing.*]

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

170

Laertes. Thought⁵ and affliction, passion,⁶ hell itself,

⁵anxiety⁶suffering

She turns to favour,⁷ and to prettiness.

⁷grace

Ophelia. [*Singing.*]

And will he not come again?

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead:

Go to thy death-bed:

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll.⁸

⁸head

He is gone, he is gone,

180

And we cast away moan:⁹

⁹waste our

moans

God ha'¹⁰ mercy on his soul!

¹⁰have

And of all Christian souls! I pray God.—God be wi'¹¹ you!

[*Exit.*]¹¹with

Laertes. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with¹² your grief,

¹²share in

Or you deny me¹³ right.¹⁴ Go but apart, Make choice *of whom your wisest friends you will,

¹³me (dative)¹⁴my right

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:

* Of your wisest friends whom you will.

*If by direct or *by collateral hand*¹
 They find us *touch'd*,² we will our kingdom give, 190
 Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
 To you in satisfaction; but if not,
 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
 And we shall jointly labour with your soul
 To give it due content.

Laertes. Let this be so;

*His means*³ of death, his obscure funeral,
 No trophy, sword, nor *hatchment*⁴ o'er his bones,
 No noble rite, nor formal *ostentation*,⁵
 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
 That I must *call't in question*.⁶

King. So you shall; 200

†And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
 I pray you go with me. *[Exeunt.]*

¹*indirectly*
²*implicated*

³*the means of*
⁴*escutcheon*
⁵*outward show*

⁶*demand an inquiry*

SCENE VI.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

Enter HORATIO and a Servant.

Horatio. What⁷ are they that would speak
 with me?

Servant. Sailors, sir: they say they have
 letters for you.

Horatio. Let them come in. *[Exit Servant.]*
 I do not know from what part of the world
 I should be *greeted*,⁸ if not from Lord Hamlet.

⁷*what manner of men*

⁸*saluted with greetings*

Enter Sailors.

1st Sailor. God bless you, sir.

Horatio. Let Him bless thee, too.

1st Sailor. He shall, sir, *an't*⁹ please Him.
 There's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the
 ambassador that was bound for England; if 10
 your name be Horatio, as I am *let to know*¹⁰ it is.

⁹*if it*

¹⁰*informed*

* If they find me implicated (*touched*) in the murder, either having committed it myself (*directly*), or by employing assassins (*collaterally*).

† Let the axe of the executioner fall on the offender.

Horatio. [*Reads.*] "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked¹ this, give these fellows some means² to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment³ gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled⁴ valour: in the grapple I boarded them; on the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy.⁵ but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will⁶ make thee dumb; yet are they, *much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

"He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET."
Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier,⁷ that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

Enter KING and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance⁹ seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
*Sith*¹⁰ you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laertes. It well¹¹ appears:—but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,¹²
†So crimeful¹³ and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

¹looked over,
i.e. read
²means (of
access)
³equipment
⁴in desperation

20

⁵merciful

⁶(which) will

30

⁷dative

⁸more speedily

⁹acquittal

¹⁰since

¹¹plainly

¹²deeds

¹³criminal

* Inadequate to express the importance of the matter.

† In their nature so criminal and deserving the punishment of death.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem *much un-*
sineu'd,¹

10 ¹strengthless

But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his
mother,

Lives almost *by his looks*;² and for myself,
My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,
She's so *conjunctive*³ to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his *sphere*,⁴
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public *count*⁵ I might not go,
Is the great love the *general gender*⁶ bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to
stone,

²on the sight of
him

³closely joined

⁴orbit

⁵account, trial

⁶common
people

Convert his *gyves*⁷ to graces; so that my *arrows*,⁸
Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,
Would have *reverted*⁹ to my bow again,
And not *where I had aimed them*.¹⁰

20

⁷fetters

⁸i. e. schemes
(against
Hamlet)

⁹turned back

¹⁰gone to the
mark

Laertes. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, *if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections: but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you
must not think

30

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
†That we can let our beard be *shook*¹¹ with dan-
ger,

¹¹shaken

And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear
more:

I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine——

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

Messenger. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

* If I may praise her as she was before her madness.

† Danger being so near as to come into our very face.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Messenger. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:

They were given me by Claudio; he received them

Of¹ him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.

Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*]

[*Reads.*] 'High and mighty, you shall know I am set *naked*² on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.

"HAMLET."

What *should*³ this mean? Are all the rest come back,

Or is it some *abuse*,⁴ and no such thing?

Laertes. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's *character*:⁵—

"naked,"—

And, in a postscript here, he says, "alone."

Can you advise me?

Laertes. I'm *lost*⁶ in it, my lord. But let him come;

It warms the very sickness in my heart,
*That*⁷ I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus didest thou."

King. *If it be so, Laertes,

As⁸ how should it be so? how otherwise?

Will you be *ruled*⁹ by me?

Laertes. Ay, my lord;

So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,

As checking at his voyage, and that he means

No more to undertake it, I will work him

To an exploit, now *ripe*¹⁰ in my *device*,¹¹

40

¹from²alone³can possibly⁴trick⁵handwriting

50

⁶perplexed⁷to think
that⁸for indeed⁹guided

60

¹⁰matured¹¹scheme

* If he be really returned; but how can he be? and yet to judge from this letter he must have come back.

Under the which he *shall not choose but*¹ fall:
 And for his death no *wind of blame*² shall breathe;
 But even his mother shall *uncharge*³ the *prac-*
tice,⁴

And call it accident.

Laertes. My lord, I will be ruled;
 The rather, if you could devise it so,
 That I might be the *organ*.⁵

King. It falls *right*.⁶
 You have been talk'd of since your travel much, 70
 And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a *quality*⁷
 Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
 Did not together pluck such envy from him,
 As did that one; and that, in my *regard*,⁸
 Of the unworthiest *siege*.⁹

Laertes. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
 Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
 The light and careless *livery*¹⁰ that it wears,
 Than settled age his *sables* and his *weeds*,¹¹
*Importing*¹² health and graveness.—Two months
 since 80

Here was a gentleman of Normandy:
 I've seen myself, and served against, the French,
 And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
 Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been *incorpsed*¹³ and demi-natured
 With the brave beast: *so far he *topp'd*¹⁴ my
 thought,

That I, in *forgery*¹⁵ of shapes and tricks,
 Come short of what he did.

Laertes. A Norman was't?

King. A Norman. 90

Laertes. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same.

¹cannot help
falling
²breath of
scandal
³bring no
charge of
⁴trickery

⁵instrument,
means
⁶exactly

⁷accomplish-
ment

⁸opinion
⁹seat or rank

¹⁰dress
¹¹robes
¹²denoting

¹³incorporate
¹⁴surpassed
¹⁵imagination

* So far did he exceed my imagination that I, in conceiving all possible shapes and maneuvers, etc.

Laertes. I know him well: *he is the brooch,
indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed
If one could match you: the *scrimers*¹ of their
nation,

He swore, had neither *motion*,² guard, nor eye. 100

If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his

†Did Hamlet so envenom with *his envy*,³

That he could nothing do but wish and beg

Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.

Now, out of this——

Laertes. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?

Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,

A face without a heart?

Laertes. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your
father;

But that† I know love is begun by time; 110

And that I see, in passages of proof,

Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

There lives within the very flame of love

A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;

And nothing is at a like goodness *still*,⁴

For goodness, growing to a *plurisy*,⁵

Dies in his own too-much: that we would do,

We *should*⁶ do when we *would*,⁷ °for this

“*would*” changes,

¹fencers

²thrust

³jealousy of
him

⁴always
⁵redundancy
of blood
⁶ought to
(should)
⁷desire (would)

* The brightest ornament and most precious person in all the nation.

† Impregnate Hamlet with jealousy of his skill.

‡ I know that love commences at a precise moment of time, and I observe by passages of experience that it dies out in course of time.

° Our will is apt, for many reasons, to postpone performance of action and then the duty remains neglected and undone, and we become like spend-thrifts, vainly sighing for the estate we have squandered.

And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents; 120
And then this "should" is like *a spendthrift
sigh,

That hurts by easing. But, to the *quick o' the
ulcer*:¹—

Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Laertes. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder
sanctuarize; ²

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good
Laertes,

† Will you do this, keep close within your
chamber?

Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come
home:

We'll *put*³ on *those*⁴ shall praise your excellence, 130
And set a double varnish on the fame

The Frenchman gave you; bring you, *in fine*,⁵
together,

And wager on your heads: he, being *remiss*,⁶

‡ Most *generous*,⁷ and free from all contriving,

Will not *peruse*⁸ the foils; so that, with ease,

Or with a little shuffling, you may choose

A sword *unbated*,⁹ and, in a *pass of practice*,¹⁰

Requite him for your father.

Laertes. I will do't:

And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.

I bought an *unction*¹¹ of a *mountebank*,¹² 140

So *mortal*,¹³ that but dip a knife in it,

Where it draws blood no *cataplasm*¹⁴ so rare,

Collected from all °*simples*¹⁵ that have virtue

Under the moon, can save the thing from death

That is but scratch'd withal; I'll touch my point

¹root of the
matter

²protect

³instigate
⁴those (who)

⁵in short

⁶careless
⁷noble-hearted

⁸examine
closely
⁹unblunted, i.e.
without a
button

¹⁰treacherous
thrust

¹¹a salve

¹²quack

¹³deadly

¹⁴plaster

¹⁵medicinal
herbs

* An unnecessary sigh that wastes the strength.

† If you are determined to do this.

‡ Most noble-hearted and absolutely straightforward.

° Plants that have magic virtues when gathered by moonlight.

With this *contagion*,¹ that, if I *gall*² him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this:
Weigh what convenience, both of time and
means,

*May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,
And that our *drift*³ *look*⁴ through our bad per-
formance,

'Twere better not *assay*'d;⁵ therefore this project
Should have a *back*,⁶ or second, that might hold,
If this should *blast*⁷ in *proof*.⁸ Soft!—let me see:
We'll make a solemn wager on your *cunnings*.⁹
I ha't:

When in your motion you are hot and *dry*¹⁰
*As*¹¹ make your bouts more violent to that end,
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared
him

A chalice for the *nonce*,¹² whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd *stuck*,¹³ 160
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's
heel,
So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd,
Laertes.

Laertes. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows *aslant*¹⁴ a
brook,

That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and *long*
purples,¹⁵

That *liberal*¹⁶ shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them:

¹*poison*
²*scratch*

³*intention*
⁴*appear*

⁵*attempted*

⁶*backer*

⁷*burst*

⁸*testing*

⁹*skill*

¹⁰*thirsty*

¹¹*so*

¹²*occasion*

¹³*thrust in*
fencing

¹⁴*leaning over*

¹⁵*purple orchid*

¹⁶*freer spoken*

* "Enable us to act our proposed part."

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
 When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread
 wide,

And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:
*Which*¹ time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
 As one *incapable*² of her own distress,
 *Or like a creature native and indued
 Unto that element: but long it could not be,
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink, 180
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.

Laertes. Alas, then she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laertes. Too much of water hast thou, poor
 Ophelia,

And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
 It is our *trick*;³ nature her custom holds,
 Let shame say what it will: †when these are gone,
 The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord:
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
 But that this folly *douts it*.⁴ [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude. 190
 How much I had to do to calm his rage!
 Now fear I this will *give it start*⁵ again;
 Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

¹during which
²unable to feel
 (three syllables)

³particular
 habit

⁴puts it out,
 extinguishes

⁵set it in motion

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Churchyard.

Enter two Clowns, with spades, etc.

1st Clown. Is she to be buried in Christian
 burial, that wilfully seeks her own *salvation*?⁶

2nd Clown. I tell thee, she is; and therefore
 make her grave *straight*:⁷ the *crowner*⁸ hath sat
 on her, and finds it Christian burial.

⁶he means
 destruction

⁷immediately
⁸coroner

* "Connected by nature with and endowed with qualities enabling her to live in water."

† When I have ceased weeping I will put away this womanish way.

1st Clown. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2nd Clown. Why, 'tis found so.

1st Clown. It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform: *argal*,¹ she drowned herself wittingly. 10

2nd Clown. Nay, but hear you, goodman deliver.²

1st Clown. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that? but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: *argal*, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. 20

2nd Clown. But is this law?

1st Clown. Ay, marry, is't; crowner's *quest*³ law.

2nd Clown. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1st Clown. Why, there thou *say'st*;⁴ and the more pity, that great folk should have *countenance*⁵ in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their *even*⁶ Christian.—Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession. 30

2nd Clown. Was he a gentleman?

1st Clown. He was the first that ever bore arms.⁷

2nd Clown. Why, he had none.

1st Clown. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms?⁸ I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself— 40

2nd Clown. Go to.

¹*ergo*,
consequently

²*digger*

³*inquest*

⁴*to the point*

⁵*approval*

⁶*fellow*

⁷*armorial*
bearings

⁸*a play on*
words

1st Clown. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2nd Clown. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand *tenants*.¹

1st Clown. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: *argal*,² the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2nd Clown. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1st Clown. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2nd Clown. Marry, now I can tell.

1st Clown. To't.

2nd Clown. Mass,³ I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO at a distance.

1st Clown. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker:" the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to *Yaughan*;⁴ fetch me a *stoop*⁵ of liquor.

[Exit 2nd Clown.]

[He digs and sings.]

In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet,

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behave,

O, methought, there was nothing *meet*.⁶

Hamlet. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Horatio. *Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Hamlet. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the *daintier*⁷ sense,

50 ¹occupants

²therefore

60

³by the mass

⁴may be a corruption of
Johan
⁵tankard

70

⁶suitable

⁷more delicate

* Custom has made it an easy duty for him: one unhardened by habit would feel it more keenly.

1st Clown. [Sings.]

But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me *intill*¹ the land,
As if I had never been such.

[Throws up a skull.

Hamlet. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave *jowls*² it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a *politician*,³ which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that *would*⁴ circumvent God, might it not?

Horatio. It might, my lord.

Hamlet. Or of a courtier; which could say, "Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Horatio. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's; *chapless*,⁵ and knocked about the *mazard*⁶ with a sexton's spade: here's *fine revolution*,⁷ an' we had the *trick*⁸ to see't. Did these bones cost no more *the*⁹ breeding, but to play at loggats with them? mine ache to think on't.

1st Clown. [Sings.]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
*For and*¹⁰ a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[Throws up another skull.

Hamlet. There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his *quiddits*¹¹ now, his *quillits*,¹² his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the *sconce*¹³ with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of *battery*?¹⁴ Hum! This fellow might be in's time

80

¹into²knocks³schemer⁴would like to

90

⁵without a jaw⁶head⁷wonderful⁸change⁹skill⁹(in) the

100

¹⁰and also¹¹equivocations¹²nice points¹³head¹⁴for assault

110

a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the *fine*¹ of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? 120
The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the *inheritor*² himself have no more, ha?

¹*end*²*possessor*

Horatio. Not a jot more, my lord.

Hamlet. Is not parchment made of sheepskins?

Horatio. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Hamlet. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sir? 130

1st Clown. Mine, sir.

[*Sings.*] O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

Hamlet. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1st Clown. You lie out *on't*,³ sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

³*of it*

Hamlet. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the 140 *quick*;⁴ therefore thou liest.

⁴*living*

1st Clown. 'Tis a *quick*⁵ lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

⁵*lively*

Hamlet. What man dost thou dig it for?

1st Clown. For no man, sir.

Hamlet. What woman, then?

1st Clown. For none, neither.

Hamlet. Who is to be buried in't?

1st Clown. One that was a woman, sir; but, 150
rest her soul, she's dead.

Hamlet. How *absolute*⁶ the knave is! we must speak *by the card*,⁷ or *equivocation*⁸ will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three

⁶*particular*⁷*carefully*⁸*double meaning*

years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so *picked*,¹ that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he *galls*² his *kibe*.³ —How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1st Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

160

Hamlet. How long is that since?

1st Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Hamlet. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1st Clown. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

170

Hamlet. Why?

1st Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Hamlet. How came he mad?

1st Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Hamlet. How strangely?

1st Clown. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet. Upon what ground?⁴

1st Clown. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

180

Hamlet. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

1st Clown. Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Hamlet. Why he more than another?

1st Clown. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Hamlet. Whose was it?

¹*precise,*
particular
²*rub*
³*chap, or sore*
on the heel

⁴*for what*
cause

1st Clown. A mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Hamlet. Nay, I know not.

1st Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'a¹ poured a flagon of *Rhenish*² on my head once. This same skull, sir, was *Yorick's*³ skull, the king's jester.

Hamlet. This?

200

1st Clown. E'en that.

Hamlet. Let me see.—[*Takes the skull.*]—Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of *infinite jest*,⁴ of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my *gorge*⁵ rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your *gibes*⁶ now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? *quite chap-fallen*?⁷ Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this *favour*⁸ she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

¹he
²Rhenish wine
³George's

⁴inexhaustible
wit

⁵throat, i.e. I
feel sick

⁶clever sarcasm

⁷quite fallen
away

⁸appearance

Horatio. What's that, my lord?

Hamlet. Dost thou think *Alexander*⁹ looked o' this fashion i' the earth?¹⁰

Horatio. E'en so.

220

Hamlet. And smelt so? pah!

[*Puts down the skull.*]

Horatio. E'en so, my lord.

Hamlet. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Horatio. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Hamlet. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither *with modesty enough*,¹¹ and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander

⁹Alexander the
Great
¹⁰when buried

¹¹without exag-
geration

230

was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

O, that that earth, which kept the world in
awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's
*flaw!*¹

But soft! but soft! aside:—here comes the king. 240

Enter Priests, etc., in procession: the corpse of OFHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, etc.

The queen, the courtiers: who is that they
*follow?*²

And with such *maimed*³ rites? This doth
betoken

The corse they follow did with desperate hand
*Fordo*⁴ its own life: 'twas of some *estate*.⁵

*Couch*⁶ we awhile, and mark.

[Retiring with HORATIO.

Laertes. What ceremony else?

Hamlet. That is Laertes, a very noble youth:
mark.

Laertes. What ceremony else?

1st Priest. Her *obsequies*⁷ have been as far
enlarged

As we have *warranty*⁸: her death was doubtful; 250

And, *but that great command o'ersways the
order,

She *should*⁹ in ground *unsanctified*¹⁰ have lodged,
Till the last trumpet; *for*¹¹ charitable prayers,
Shards,¹² flints, and pebbles should be thrown on
her:

¹*gust of wind*

²*(to the grave)*

³*defective*

⁴*undo, destroy*

⁵*rank*

⁶*lie down and
hide*

⁷*funeral rites*

⁸*permission*

⁹*ought to*

¹⁰*unconsecrated*

¹¹*in the place
of*

¹²*potsherds*

* Were it not that the express command of the king overrides the decree (or canon) of the Church.

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin *crants*,¹
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laertes. Must there no more be done?

1st Priest. No more be done:

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*,² and such rest to her 260
As to *peace-parted*³ souls.

Laertes. Lay her i' the earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest *howling*.⁴

Hamlet. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell!

[*Scattering flowers.*]

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's
wife;

I *thought*⁵ thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet
maid,

And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laertes. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head, 270
Whose wicked deed thy *most ingenious sense*⁶
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[*Leaping into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the *quick*⁷ and dead,
Till of this *flat*⁸ a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Hamlet. [*Advancing.*] What⁹ is he, whose
grief

Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
*Conjures*¹⁰ the *wandering stars*,¹¹ and makes them
stand,¹²

Like *wonder-wounded*¹³ hearers? This is I, 280
Hamlet the Dane.

[*Leaping into the grave.*]

Laertes.

The devil take thy soul!

[*Grappling with him.*]

¹*garlands*

²*hymn of peace*

³*departed in peace*

⁴*i. e. for mercy*

⁵*fondly expected*

⁶*intellect*

⁷*living*

⁸*level surface*

⁹*i. e. manner of man*

¹⁰*invokes*

¹¹*planets*

¹²*i. e. still*

¹³*struck with wonder*

Hamlet. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For though I am not *splenetic*¹ and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—

Horatio. Good, my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

Hamlet. Why, I will fight with him upon this
theme²

Until my eyelids will no longer wag.³ 290

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Hamlet. I loved Ophelia: forty thousand
brothers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For⁴ love of God, forbear him.

Hamlet. 'Swounds,⁵ show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't⁶ weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear
thyself?

Woo't drink up Esil? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine? 300

To out-face⁷ me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick⁸ with her, and so will I:

And, if thou prate⁹ of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us; *till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like¹⁰ a wart! Nay, and¹¹ thou'lt
mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere¹² madness:

And thus awhile the fit will work on him;

Anon,¹³ as patient as the female dove,

¹easily angered

²subject

³move

⁴for (the)

⁵by God's
wounds

⁶wouldst (thou)

⁷browbeat

⁸alive

⁹rant

¹⁰no bigger than
¹¹if

¹²absolute

¹³soon

* Till the spot we stand on burns its top against the zodiac (*burning zone*),
or imaginary path of the sun.

When that her golden *couplets*¹ are *disclosed*,² 310
His silence will sit drooping.

¹*young*
²*produced*

Hamlet. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

[*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit* HORATIO.

[*To* LAERTES.] Strengthen your patience *in*³ our
last night's speech;

³*in the thought*
of

We'll put the matter to the *present push*.—⁴

⁴*instant test*

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument:

320

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;

Till then, in patience our proceeding be.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Hamlet. So much for this, sir: now shall you
see the *other*:⁵

⁵*document*

You do remember all the *circumstance*?⁶

⁶*details*

Horatio. Remember it, my lord!

Hamlet. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of
*fighting*⁷

⁷*struggle*

That would not let me sleep: methought I lay

Worse than the *mutines*⁸ in the *bilboes*.⁹

Rashly,¹⁰

⁸*rebels*

⁹*stocks*

¹⁰*hastily*

¹¹*haste*

And praised be *rashness*¹¹ for it: let us know,

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,

When our deep plots *do pall*:¹² and that should
teach,

¹²*fail*

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,

10

Rough-hew them how we will.

Horatio.

That is most certain,

Hamlet. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarfed about¹ me, in the dark
*Groped*² I to find out them: had my desire;
*Finger'd*³ their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room⁴ again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found,
Horatio,—

O royal knavery!—an exact command,
*Larded*⁵ with many several sorts of reasons,
*Importing*⁶ Denmark's⁷ health, and *England's*⁷
too,

With, ho! *such *bugs*⁸ and goblins in my life,
That, on the *supervise*,⁹ no *leisure bated*,¹⁰
No, not to *stay*¹¹ the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Horatio. Is't possible?

Hamlet. Here's the commission: read it at
more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Horatio. I beseech you.

Hamlet. Being thus *benetted*¹² round with
villainies,—

†Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
*They*¹³ had begun the play. I sat me down;
Devised a new commission; wrote it *fair*.¹⁴

I once did hold it, as our *statists*¹⁵ do,
A *baseness*¹⁶ to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me *yeoman's*¹⁷ service: wilt thou know
The effect¹⁸ of what I wrote?

Horatio. Ay, good my lord.

Hamlet. An *earnest conjuration*¹⁹ from the
king,

As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might
flourish;

¹thrown loosely
round

²sought

³put my hand
on

⁴cabin

20 ⁵interspersed
⁶concerning
⁷king of

⁸bugbears

⁹looking over

¹⁰without delay

¹¹wait for

¹²ensnared

30 ¹³i.e. my brains
¹⁴in good hand
writing

¹⁵statesmen

¹⁶mark of low
birth

¹⁷right trusty

¹⁸purport

¹⁹solemn appeal

40

* Such bugbears and imaginary fears caused through my being alive.

† Ere I could devise a plan, my brains had commenced the work.

As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their *amities*;¹
And many such-like *as'es of great charge*,²—
That, on the *view and know*³ of these contents,
Without *debatement*⁴ further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to *sudden*⁵ death,
Not shriving-time allowed.

Horatio. How was this sealed?

Hamlet. Why, even in that was heaven
ordinant.⁶

I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the *model*⁷ of that Danish seal;
Folded the *writ*⁸ up in the form of the other;
*Subscribed*⁹ it; *gave't the impression*,¹⁰ placed it
safely,

The changeling never known. Now, the next
day

Was our sea-fight; and what to this was *sequent*¹¹
Thou know'st already.

Horatio. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz
go to't.¹²

Hamlet. *Why, man, they did make love to
this employment;

They are *not near*¹³ my conscience; †their *defeat*¹⁴
Does by their own *insinuation*¹⁵ grow:

'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the *pass*¹⁶ and *fell*¹⁷ incensed points
Of mighty *opposites*.¹⁸

Horatio. Why, what a king is this!

Hamlet. Does it not,¹⁹ think'st thee, *stand me*
*now upon*¹⁹—

He that hath kill'd my king, and wronged my
mother;

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes;

¹friendships
²weighty pro-
visos
³reading and
knowledge
⁴debate
⁵instant

⁶ordaining

50 ⁷counterpart
⁸document
⁹signed
¹⁰sealed

¹¹subsequent

¹²to their death

¹³do not trouble
¹⁴destruction
¹⁵intrusion

60 ¹⁶thrust
¹⁷deadly
¹⁸adversaries

¹⁹is it not
incumbent
upon me?

* They undertook this service for the king of their own free will; it exactly accorded with their own wishes.

† Their destruction (*i. e.* of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) has been brought about by their wilful intruding into this business; it is dangerous for any one to come between the thrust (*pass*) and sword-points of angry (*incensed*) opponents fighting a deadly (*fell*) duel.

Thrown out his *angle* for my proper¹ life,
And with such *cozenage*² — is't not perfect con-
science,

To *quit*³ him with this arm? and is't not to be
damn'd

To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Horatio. It must be *shortly*⁴ known to him
from England

What is the *issue*⁵ of the business there.

Hamlet. It will be short: the *interim*⁶ is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say "One."

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,

That to Laertes I forgot myself;

For, by the *image*⁷ of my cause, I see

The portraiture of his: I'll court his *favours*⁸:

But, sure, the *bravery*⁹ of his grief did put me

Into a towering passion.

Horatio. Peace! who comes here? 80

Enter OSRIC.

Osric. Your lordship is right welcome back
to Denmark.

Hamlet. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost
know this water-fly?

Horatio. No, my good lord.

Hamlet. Thy state is the more gracious; for
'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land,
and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his
*crib*¹⁰ shall stand at the king's *mess*¹¹: 'tis a
*chough*¹²; but, as I say, spacious in the possession
of *dirt*¹³.

Osric. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at
leisure, I *should*¹⁴ impart a *thing*¹⁵ to you from
his majesty.

Hamlet. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence
of spirit. Put your *bonnet*¹⁶ to his right use; 'tis
for the head.

Osric. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

¹rod and line
for my own
life

²trickery
³to settle with
him

⁴soon

⁵result
⁶intervening
time

⁷reflection

⁸good will

⁹bragging

90

¹⁰manger

¹¹table

¹²chattering

jackdaw

¹³land

¹⁴it is my duty

¹⁵something

¹⁶cap

Hamlet. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

100

Osric. It is *indifferent*¹ cold, my lord, indeed.

¹*moderately*

Hamlet. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot; or my *complexion*²—

²*constitution*

Osric. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter—

Hamlet. I beseech you, remember—

[HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.]

Osric. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an *absolute*³ gentleman, full of most excellent *differences*,⁴ of very soft⁵ society, and *great showing*:⁶ indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the *card or calendar of gentry*,⁷ for you shall find in him the *continent*⁸ of what part a gentleman would see.

110

³*perfect*⁴*distinctions*⁵*gentle*⁶*elegance*⁷*guide of fashion*⁸*embodiment*⁹*definition*¹⁰*loss*

Hamlet. Sir, *his *definement*⁹ suffers no *perdition*¹⁰ in you:—though, I know, to divide him *inventorially*,¹¹ would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet *but yaw neither*,¹² in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such *dearth*¹³ and *rareness*,¹⁴ as, to make true *diction*¹⁵ of him, his *semblable*¹⁶ is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his *umbrage*,¹⁷ nothing more.

120

¹¹*like taking an inventory*¹²see footnote¹³*scarcity, dear-ness*¹⁴*qualities rarely found*¹⁵*description*¹⁶*likeness*¹⁷*shadow*

Osric. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Hamlet. The *concernancy*,¹⁸ sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our *more rawer*¹⁹ breath?

130

¹⁸*connection*¹⁹*double comparative*

Osric. Sir?

* The description of him suffers no loss in your telling—though to make a detailed list of all his good qualities would bewilder a skilled arithmetician, who would come as far from a complete enumeration of them as a boat holding an unsteady course (yaw) falls behind a fast-sailing vessel.

Horatio. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Hamlet. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osrice. Of Laertes?

Horatio. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Hamlet. Of him, sir.

140

Osrice. I know you are not ignorant——

Hamlet. 'I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, *it would not much approve me.*¹ Well, sir.

¹*do me much credit*

Osrice. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is——

Hamlet. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osrice. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the *imputation*² laid on him *by them*,³ in his *meed*⁴ he's *unfellowed*.⁵

150

Hamlet. What's his weapon?

Osrice. Rapier and dagger.

Hamlet. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osrice. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has *imponed*,⁶ as I take it, six French rapiers and *poniards*,⁷ with their *assigns*,⁸ as girdle, *hangers*,⁹ and so: three of the *carriages*,¹⁰ in faith, are very dear to fancy, *very responsive*¹¹ to the hilts, most delicate *carriages*, and of very *liberal conceit*.¹²

160

Hamlet. What call you the *carriages*?

Horatio. I knew you must be edified by the margin, ere you had done.

Osrice. The *carriages*, sir, are the *hangers*.

Hamlet. The phrase would be more *germane*¹³ to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be *hangers* till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, 170 their *assigns*, and three liberal-conceited car-

²*repute*
³*by his skill in arms*
⁴*merit*
⁵*unrivalled*

⁶*staked*
⁷*small daggers*
⁸*appendages*
⁹*part of sword belt*
¹⁰*hangers*
¹¹*well matched*
¹²*elaborate design*

¹³*akin, appropriate*

riages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this imponed, as you call it?

Osric. The king, sir, hath *laid*,¹ that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.²

Hamlet. How if I answer "no?" 180

Osric. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Hamlet. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the *breathing time*³ of day with me; let the foils be brought, *the gentleman willing*,⁴ and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I *will*⁵ gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osric. Shall I *redeliver*⁶ you e'en so?

Hamlet. To this effect, sir: after what flourish your nature will. 190

Osric. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Hamlet. Yours, yours.—[*Exit* OSRIC.] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's⁷ turn.

Horatio. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Hamlet. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that, I know, the *drossy*⁸ age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of *yesty*⁹ collection, which carries them through and through the most *fond*¹⁰ and *winnowed*¹¹ opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out. 200

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you *attend*¹² him in the hall: he sends to know, if your pleasure *hold*¹³ to play with Laertes, or *that*¹⁴ you will take longer time.

¹wagered

²acceptance

³time for exercise

⁴if he be willing

⁵shall

⁶report

⁷for his

⁸worthless

⁹frothy

¹⁰foolish

¹¹well sifted

¹²await

¹³hold good

¹⁴if

Hamlet. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so ¹able as now. 210

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Hamlet. In happy time.²

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment³ to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Hamlet. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.* 220

Horatio. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Hamlet. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Horatio. Nay, good my lord——

Hamlet. It is but foolery;⁴ but it is such a kind of gain-giving,⁵ as would perhaps trouble a woman. 230

Horatio. If your mind dislike anything, obey it: I will forestall⁶ their repair⁷ hither, and say you are not fit.⁸

Hamlet. Not a whit; we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If ~~it be now~~⁹, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? *Let be.*⁹ 240

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils, etc.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*

Hamlet. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;

¹fit for the contest

²at the right moment

³act courteously

⁴a silly feeling
⁵misgiving

⁶anticipate
⁷coming
⁸ready

*It will come
will come
just in ready*

⁹no matter

But *pardon't*,¹ as you are a gentleman.

*This presence*² knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am
*punish'd*³

With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and *exception*⁴
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, 250

And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness: if't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my *disclaiming from*⁵ a *purposed evil*⁶

*Free*⁷ me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,⁸

And hurt my brother.

Laertes. I am satisfied in nature,⁹ 260

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

To my revenge: but in *my terms of*¹⁰ honour,

I stand aloof; and *will*¹¹ no *reconcilement*,¹²

*Till by some elder masters, of known honour,

I have a voice and precedent of peace,

To keep my *name*¹³ *ungored*.¹⁴ But till that time,

I do receive your offer'd love like love,

And will not wrong it.

Hamlet. I embrace it freely;¹⁵

And will this brother's wager frankly play.

Give us the foils. Come on.

Laertes. Come, one for me. 270

Hamlet. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine
ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laertes. You mock me, sir.

Hamlet. No, by this hand.

¹*pardon it*

²*these present*

³*afflicted*

⁴*objection*

⁵*disavowing*

⁶*intentional*
wrong

⁷*acquit*

⁸*at random*

⁹*personally*

¹⁰*as a matter of*

¹¹*will have*

¹²*reconciliation*

¹³*honor*

¹⁴*unstained*

¹⁵*take you at*
your word

* "Until I have an opinion and precedent that will justify me in making peace."

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—
Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Hamlet. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds. 280

Laertes. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Hamlet. This *likes me well*.¹ These foils have
all a² length?

Osric. Ay, my good lord.

[*They prepare to play.*]

King. Set me the *stoups*³ of wine upon that
table:

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
*Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their *ordnance*⁴ fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an *union*⁵ shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings 290
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the
cups;

And let the *kettle*⁶ to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to
earth,

“Now the king drinks to Hamlet!”—Come,
begin;—

And you, the judges, bear a *wary*⁷ eye.

Hamlet. Come on, sir.

Laertes. Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

Hamlet. One.

Laertes. No.

Hamlet. Judgment.

Osric. A hit, a very *palpable*⁸ hit.

Laertes. Well;—again.

¹*pleases, suits*

²*one*

³*tankards*

⁴*cannon*

⁵*pearl*

⁶*Kettledrum*

⁷*watchful*

⁸*evident*

* Pay off (Laertes) in meeting him at the third encounter.

King. Stay; give me drink.—Hamlet, this
pearl is thine; 300
Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*]

Hamlet. I'll play this bout first; set it by
awhile.

Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laertes. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my *napkin*,¹ rub thy brows:

The queen *carouses to thy fortune*,² Hamlet.

Hamlet. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon
me.

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup; it is
too late. 310

Hamlet. I dare not drink yet, madam; by
and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laertes. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think 't.

Laertes. [*Aside.*] And yet it is almost against
my conscience.

Hamlet. Come, for the third, Laertes: you
but *dally*;³

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afeared you make a *wanton*⁴ of me.

Laertes. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*]

Osric. Nothing, neither way.

Laertes. Have at you now. 320

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then in scuffling,
they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds
LAERTES.*]

King. Part them; they are incensed.

Hamlet. Nay, come again. [*The QUEEN falls.*]

Osric. Look to the queen there, ho!

Horatio. They bleed on both sides. How is
it, my lord?

¹handkerchief

²drinks good
luck to thee

³trifle

⁴sport of

Osric. How is it, Laertes?

Laertes. Why, as a woodcock to mine own
springe,¹ *Osric*;

¹*snare*

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Hamlet. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, 'no, the drink, the drink,—O my
dear Hamlet!—

The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd. [*Dies.*

Hamlet. O villainy!—Ho! let the door be
locked:—

330

Treachery! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*

Laertes. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou
art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good;

In thee there is not half an hour of life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated,² and *envenom'd*,³ the foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again: thy mother's poisoned:

I can no more:—the king, the king's to blame.

Hamlet. The point envenomed too!—

340

Then venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the KING.*

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends: I am but
hurt.

Hamlet. Here, thou incestuous, murderous,
damned Dane,

Drink off this potion:—is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [*KING dies.*

Laertes. He is justly served;

It is a poison *temper'd*⁴ by himself.

⁴*compounded*

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;

Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Hamlet. Heaven make thee *free*⁵ of it! I
follow thee.

350

⁵*i.e. from the
guilt*

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen adieu!

You that look pale and tremble at this *chance*,⁶

⁶*event*

That are but mutes or audience to this act,

Had I but time, —as this *fell*¹ *sergeant*,² Death,
Is strict in his arrest, —O, I could tell you—
But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Horatio. Never believe it:
I am more an *antique*³ Roman than a Dane:
Here's yet some liquor left.

Hamlet. As thou'rt a man, 360
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven I'll have 't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,⁴
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.

[*March afar off, and shot within.*

What warlike noise is this?

Osric. Young Fortinbras, with conquest
come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.⁵

Hamlet. O, I die, Horatio; 370
The potent poison quite o'er-crows⁶ my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election 'lights'⁷
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice.⁸
*So tell him, with the *occurents*,⁹ more and less,
Which have *solicited*.¹⁰—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Horatio. Now cracks a noble heart:—good
night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

[*March within.*

Why does the drum come hither?

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors,
and others.*

Fortinbras. Where is this sight?

¹*cruel*
²*sheriff's officer*

³*ancient*

⁴*forego for a
time the joys
of heaven*

⁵*fires this
salute*

⁶*triumphs over*

⁷*alights*

⁸*vote, support*

⁹*events*

¹⁰*roused (me)*

* Tell him that, and also inform him of all the events greater and smaller
which have called for this deed of mine.

Horatio. What is it ye would see? 380
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fortinbras. *This quarry cries on havoc. O
proud Death,
What feast is *toward*¹ in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes *at a shot*²
So bloodily hast struck?

1st Ambassador. The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?

Horatio. Not from *his*³ mouth, 390
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so *jump*⁴ upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from Eng-
land,

Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a *stage*⁵ be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters; 400
Of deaths *put on*⁶ by cunning, and forced cause;
And, in this *upshot*,⁷ purposes mistook
Fall'n on the *inventors*'⁸ heads: all this can I
Truly *deliver*.⁹

Fortinbras. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my *vantage*¹⁰ doth invite me.

Horatio. Of that I shall have also cause to
speak,
And from *his*¹¹ mouth whose voice will *draw on*
more.¹² 410
But let this same be *presently*¹³ performed,

¹*imminent*
²*with one shot*

³*the king's*

⁴*just*

⁵*raised*
platform

⁶*brought about*

⁷*final issue*

⁸*contrivers*

⁹*narrate*

¹⁰*position of*
advantage

¹¹*Hamlet's*
¹²*influence more*
people
¹³*immediately*

* This heap of dead bodies cries out against this wanton slaughter.

Even while men's minds are wild: lest more mis-
chance,

On plots and errors, happen.

Fortinbras. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been *put on*,¹
To have proved most royally: and, for his pas-
sage,

The soldiers' music, and the rites of war,
*Speak*² loudly for him.

Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss. 420
Go, bid the soldiers *shoot*.³

[A dead march. *Exeunt, bearing away the
dead bodies; after which a peal of ordnance
is shot off.*

¹*proved*

²*(let them)
speak*

³*discharge a
volley in
honor of
the dead*

NOTES

ACT I. SCENE I

Line 2. **Unfold yourself.** Declare who you are.

3. **Long live the king.** The password for the night.

15. **This ground.** This country, i. e. Denmark.

Liegemen to the Dane. Loyal subjects to the king of Denmark.

16. **Give you good-night.** Either (1) God give you, or (2) I give you.

19. **A piece of him.** Something like him.

29. **Approve our eyes.** Confirm what we said we saw.

36. **Yond same star.** Yond is a demonstrative pronoun. Star, the Great Bear, which pivots, as it were, around the pole-star.

42. **Scholar.** Having a knowledge of Latin, and able to exorcise the Ghost by adjuration.

44. **Harrows.** Tortures, by rending my heart, as a harrow tears up the ground.

45. **It would be spoke to.** There was a superstitious idea that a ghost should be addressed before it could speak.

46. **Usurp'st.** To take possession of and use without any right. The usurpation is twofold: (1) of the time of midnight; (2) of the form and person of the king.

48. **Buried Denmark.** The late king of Denmark, Hamlet's father, now dead and buried.

57. **Sensible.** What is apparent to the senses.

63. **Sledded Polack.** Polander using a sledge.

68. **The gross and scope of my opinion.** I cannot say exactly, but to speak generally, my opinion is.

72. **So.** As valiant.

85. **This side of our known world.** The eastern hemisphere.

87. **Law and heraldry.** Law = civil law. Heraldry = the formalities of chivalry.

88. **With his life.** I. e. if he fell in combat.

90. **Moiety competent.** A portion; an equivalent portion of territory.

94. **Carriage of the article design'd.** The meaning of the agreement drawn up between them.

96. **Unimprovèd.** Untried, not taught by experience.

98. **Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute.** Gathered together a band of desperadoes.

99. **For food and diet.** I. e. no pay given; they enlisted for their keep alone.

100. **Hath a stomach in't.** Affords an opportunity for the display of courage.

101. **Our state.** The rulers of the state.

107. **Romage.** Literally, roomage, or stowage (rummage) of a ship's cargo in the hold; hence, the hurry and bustle of loading a ship.

109. **Well may it sort.** Agree. Bernardo and Horatio ascribe the appearance of the ghost as indicating his concern in the impending war. They have no suspicion that the king had been murdered. Thus we learn by implication that the murder had been kept secret.

112. **Mote.** A small thing, i. e. the appearance of the ghost, but a portent of great troubles.

114. **Mightiest Julius.** Julius Cæsar, the famous Roman general, who was assassinated by conspirators. See also note III. ii. 111.

119. **Neptune.** The god of the sea; so "Neptune's empire" means the ocean. See also note III. ii. 157.

120. **Doomsday.** Death. The day of judgment.

122. **Harbingers.** Forerunners.

125. **Climatures.** Particular districts.

127. **I'll cross it.** Cross the ghost in his course. It was popularly supposed that misfortune would befall anyone who crossed the path of a ghost.

136. **Up-hoarded. . . . Extorted,** etc. The popular superstition was that if a man had wrongfully obtained wealth, and concealed it during his life, his spirit would have no rest until it had revealed the place of concealment.

140. **Partisan.** A long-handled weapon usually so constructed as to fill the office of an axe and a bayonet.

154. **Extravagant and erring.** "Wandering abroad and straying" in the original meaning of the Latin *extravagare* and *errare*.

162. **Planets strike.** Planets were supposed to influence human life. Especially were they supposed to injure at night.

166. **Russet.** Reddish, rosy. It may be noted that the first streak of dawn is gray, not red.

ACT I. SCENE II

4. **Brow of woe.** Woeful brow.

18. **A weak supposal of our worth.** Forming the estimate that our power is weak.

21. **Colleaguèd**, etc. Fortinbras has two thoughts in mind: (1) the weakness of the kingdom of Denmark; (2) the hope of gaining advantage. The two thoughts combined (*colleaguèd*) lead him to make his demands upon the king.

29. **Bed-rid.** Confined to his bed, unable to take part in the war.

31. **In that.** Inasmuch as.

32. **Proportions.** The different parts of the army, i. e. horsemen, infantry, etc., being supplied in due proportions.

33. **Subject.** Collective, his subjects.

39. **Commend your duty.** Give evidence of your readiness to perform your duty.

44. **Speak of reason.** Make a reasonable request.

47. **Native to.** Closely connected by nature. The context shows that Polonius supported Claudius in his election as king.

53. **Coronation.** Both Hamlet and Laertes had come to Elsinore; Hamlet from Wittenberg for the funeral of his father, Laertes from Paris to join in the coronation festivities. Laertes now desires to return to Paris, and Hamlet to Wittenberg. See note on l. 113, p. 208.

62. **Take thy fair hour.** Enjoy yourself in your youth.

63. **Best graces**, etc. May your accomplishments and gracious manners assist you to pass the time in Paris as you please.

64. **Cousin.** Hamlet was his stepson; but Shakespeare uses "cousin" to express any relationship.

65. **Kin.** Of the same race. **Kind.** Of the same nature.

67. **Too much i' the sun.** The sunshine of the king's presence. (Play on words continued from l. 65.)

68. **Nighted colour.** Dark as night. Hamlet is in mourning for his father, while the rest of the court are gaily dressed because of the coronation.

70. **Vailèd lids.** Downcast eyelids. To vail = to lower.

74. **Common.** Contrasted with *particular* in line 75.

77. **Inky cloak.** Black like ink.

78. **Customary suits.** May mean (1) black suits usually worn as a sign of mourning, or (2) the suits Hamlet was accustomed to wear.

92. **Obsequious sorrow.** Dutiful sorrow, as of a son mourning a father; and also sorrow befitting funeral ceremonies.

95. **Incorrect.** Unsubdued, unsubmitive; a participle. (See Grammatical notes, p. 239.)

99. **Any the most,** etc. Anything the most commonly perceived.

109. **The most immediate.** The next heir to the throne. The remark is intended to conciliate Hamlet and to reconcile him to his exclusion from the throne.

113. **Wittenberg.** The university was not founded until 1502, therefore the mention of it is an anachronism. It was famous in Shakespeare's day in connection with Martin Luther. It was a favorite university with the Danes.

114. **Retrograde to our desire.** Contrary to our wish.

115. **Bend you.** Change your mind and decide to stay. We speak of following our "bent" or "inclination."

118. **Lose her prayers.** Entreat in vain.

124. **In grace whereof.** In honor of Hamlet's acquiescence.

125. **Denmark drinks.** Johnson remarks on the tendency of the king to feast and drink whenever occasion presented itself.

126. **Cannon.** An anachronism.

127. **Rouse.** A deep draught.

132. **Canon.** A religious law.

Self-slaughter. The first reference to Hamlet's idea of suicide. Cf. III. i. 56, p. 128.

134. **Uses.** The ordinary habits of life.

140. **Hyperion.** A character of Greek mythology, a type of manly beauty. A satyr, in classical mythology, was a sylvan deity, typifying roughness and bestiality. See also III. iv. 56, p. 151.

149. **Niobe.** In Greek mythology, the daughter of Tantalus and the wife of Amphion, King of Thebes. She boasted that her children were more numerous and more beautiful than were those of Leto, mother of Apollo and Artemis. In revenge Apollo and Artemis killed all Niobe's children. The portrayal of Niobe's grief has ever been a favorite subject for artists.

150. **Discourse of reason.** A beast lacks intellect and is thus without the power to reason.

153. **Hercules.** A character in Greek mythology, renowned for his great strength and daring exploits.

155. **The flushing.** I. e. had ceased to produce redness.

158. **Hold my tongue.** Mark Hamlet's reticence in public on his mother's shame.

162. **Change.** Exchange. Hamlet will change places with Horatio. He will be Horatio's "servant," Horatio will be his "friend."

179. **Thrift.** A thrifty arrangement. Spoken in sarcasm.

181. **Dearest foe.** My most bitter enemy. Shakespeare uses "dear" as having an intensive force.

199. **Cap-à-pé.** From head to foot. From the Latin words *caput* (head) and *pes* (foot).

203. **Truncheon.** Staff of command.

229. **Beaver.** The lower front part of the helmet, which could be raised to expose the lower part of the face.

241. **Sable-silver'd.** Dark hair tinged with gray.

247. **Tenable in your silence.** Regarded as still to be kept secret.

255. **Foul play.** Treachery, not murder.

ACT I. SCENE III

2. **As the winds, etc.** Let me hear from you whenever the wind is favorable, and a vessel sails for France.

6. **Fashion.** Changeable and temporary as a fashion in dress.

Toy in blood. The passing fancy of youth, not a deep affection.

7. **Primy nature.** Nature in the springtime.

10. **No more but so?** Nothing more than that.

16. **The virtue of his will.** His honest intention in love.

22. **Choice.** Hamlet, as a prince, is not free to choose his wife. His choice must be approved by the state.

63. **Hoops of steel.** Bind them to thyself with bands 'as strong as steel.

64. **Dull thy palm.** Do not make thyself common by being friendly with every one.

71. **Not expressed in fancy.** Not marked by eccentricity in style.

76. **For loan oft loses both itself and friend.** There is a double loss: (1) of the money lent; (2) of the friend to whom it is lent.

86. **Shall keep the key, etc.** I will remember your advice and follow it till you release me from obedience.

90. **Marry.** An oath: "By (the Virgin) Mary."

107. **Sterling.** True, pure; used of gold. The word is an abbreviation of Esterling, a name for the Eastern merchants, who dealt in pure money, i. e. money of pure gold and exact weight. Polonius suggests that Hamlet's vows are not to be regarded as of true metal; they are unreliable.

Tender yourself more dearly. Regard or value yourself more highly.

108. **Crack the wind.** To overstrain, e. g. to break a horse's wind by overdriving.

113. **Given countenance.** Has strengthened his declaration of love by vows of constancy.

115. **Woodcocks.** Foolish birds, easily caught. The phrase is proverbial for deceiving a simple fellow.

125. **Larger tether.** A longer rope, giving an animal more space for movement. Hamlet, as if tethered with a longer rope, has more liberty of action than Ophelia.

127. **Brokers.** Go-betweens, negotiators.

133. **Slander.** Disgrace.

ACT I. SCENE IV

9. **Up-spring.** Various explanations of this word are given. According to Elze, it was "the last and consequently the wildest dance at the old German merry-makings."

12. **Triumph.** Sarcastic, representing the drinking of a pledge as some victorious event.

19. **Swinish phrase.** They speak of us as being no better than swine.

20. **Soil our addition.** Sully our title by thus comparing us to swine.

22. **The pith and marrow of our attribute.** "The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us."
—*Johnson*.

32. **Nature's livery.** A natural defect, bestowed by nature at birth.

Fortune's star. An accidental defect through the influence of circumstances. A person's life or fortune was supposed to be influenced by the stars.

35. **General censure.** Public opinion.

36. **The dram of base.** A slight admixture of evil.

40. **Spirit of health.** A saved spirit, i. e. a good spirit.

43. **Questionable shape.** Various rendered: (1) in a form inviting question, (2) capable of being questioned, (3) arousing questions in Hamlet's mind.

47. **Canonized.** Formally declared a saint according to the canons of the Roman church.

49. **Inurn'd.** Entombed. Urn, here = grave.

53. **Glimpses.** The moonbeams struggling from behind the clouds. The ghost appears during these glimpses.

54. **We fools of nature.** "We" should be "us," objective after "making,"—making us the sport of nature.

74. **Deprive your sovereignty of reason.** Take away the control of reason, the ruling principle of the mind, i. e. deprive you of the faculty of reason.

84. **Nemean lion.** The Nemean lion inhabited the valley of Nemea in Argolis. Eurytheus ordered Hercules to slay the beast as one of his twelve labors. After using his club and arrows in vain, Hercules strangled the lion with his hands.

ACT I. SCENE V

2. **My hour.** Cock-crow, when ghosts must return to the lower regions.

10. **To walk the night.** To pass the night in wandering on earth.

11. **To fast, etc.** One of the supposed punishments in hell.

12. **Days of nature.** The period of my natural life.

13. **Burnt and purged away.** An allusion to the doctrine of purgatory.

16. **Harrow.** To grievously distress.

20. **Fretful porcupine.** The porcupine, when irritated, erects its quills.

21. **Eternal blazon.** A revelation concerning the spirit world. **Blazon** = the blowing of a trumpet.

33. **Lethe.** A river of the lower world. The souls that drank of its waters immediately forgot their previous existence, and thus it became known as the river of oblivion.

37. **Process.** The full account of. "Perhaps here the sense of an official narrative, coming nearly to the meaning of the French *procès verbal*." (Clarendon Press.)

46. **Hebenon.** Oil made from henbane, which, according to Pliny, if dropped into the ear affects the brain.

79. **Distracted globe.** (1) The troubled world or (2) a bewildered brain. In acting the play Hamlet puts his hand upon his head.

80. **Table.** Writing tablet of slate or ivory.

97. **Hillo, etc.** Hamlet, desiring his friends to approach, calls to them in terms which falconers use to bring back the hunting hawk.

130. **Upon my sword.** The hilt of a sword formed a cross, and oaths were often taken upon it.

132. **Truepenny.** A familiar phrase for "an honest fellow." According to Collier it was "a mining term indicating where true ore was to be found."

147. **As a stranger give it welcome.** Treat it as you would a stranger, and politely comply with its request.

154. **Antic.** May mean either: (1) strange, fantastic or (2) disguised, with reference to a grotesquely masked person in a masquerade.

ACT II. SCENE I

8. **Keep.** Lodge, live.

26. **You may go so far.** You may charge him with such vices, but do not attribute to him anything worse.

32. **Unreclaimèd.** Untamed, a term in falconry. Reclaim = to call back the falcon.

36. **A fetch of warrant.** A device warranted to succeed in its object; or it may mean a device for which one has warrant or approval. The Quartos read "fetch of wit," a cunning device.

43. **In this consequence.** With a reply somewhat as follows.

60. **We of wisdom and of reach.** We persons of wisdom and foresight, i. e. we wise, farseeing persons.

61. **Assays of bias.** Indirect attempts. A metaphor from the game of bowls. The balls are weighted on one side so that they cannot run a direct course but must curve, and the tendency to deviate from the straight line is called bias. In the game the player does not aim directly at the Jack, but so that the ball may travel in a curve, the bias acting and bringing the ball round to the Jack. By this means the player is able to control the ball so as to pass round any obstacle lying in the direct path. What we now call the Jack was called the "mistress" in Shakespeare's time.

67. **Observe his inclination in yourself.** This line has been variously interpreted: (1) Your own inclinations will enable you to judge what his bent is likely to be; (2) Shape your course according to his inclinations; (3) Observe for yourself, do not trust to the reports of others.

69. **Ply his music.** Let him take his own course freely without interference.

76. **Down-gyvèd.** Hanging down over his ankles like gyves or fetters.

86. **Falls to.** Sets to eagerly, i. e. as a hungry man to food.

111. **To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions.** To be over-suspicious, over-cautious. This is the falling age. The young lack discretion (l. 113), i. e. are not sufficiently cautious.

ACT II. SCENE II

5. Transformation. Complete change in manner and appearance.

32. And be commanded. Ready to carry out any commission you (the king) may give us.

52. Fruit. Dessert. As the dinner is followed by the dessert, the richest part of the meal, so the message of the Ambassadors from Norway will be followed by the more important news that Polonius has to tell the king regarding Hamlet.

56. The main. The principal cause.

57. Our o'er-hasty marriage. The queen shrewdly divines the real cause of Hamlet's behavior.

58. Sift. Examine thoroughly, and learn the truth.

61. Upon our first. At our first interview with him, when we made your wishes known to him.

67. Falsely borne in hand. Trifled with and deceived. Fortinbras had taken advantage of the advanced age and feebleness of the King of Norway.

71. Assay of arms. Test of war.

78. This enterprise. The body of troops engaged in the expedition.

79. Regards of safety and allowance. Guarantees for the security of the country, and conditions on which the troops shall be allowed to pass through Denmark.

81. More consider'd. When we have had full time for further consideration.

113. Bosom. Ladies had a pocket in the front of their dress in which they carried love-letters or anything they prized.

120. Ill at these numbers. Unskilled in writing verses.

127. More above. Moreover.

137. If I had play'd the desk, or table-book. Table-book = writing tablet. A sentence variously interpreted: (1) If I had acted as the agent of their correspondence; (2) If I had minutely recorded their correspondence; (3) If I had been like a memorandum book, of no intelligence, simply receiving impressions, and not communicating them to others.

163. Loose. Let loose, as one lets a dog loose.

164. Arras. Tapestry, so called from Arras, a town in France, where it was manufactured. The stage tapestry hung some distance from the walls, so that Polonius could readily conceal himself behind it.

176. Fishmonger. One sent to fish out any secret.

227. **These tedious old fools.** The expression of Hamlet's relief at finding himself free from the presence of Polonius. He is his natural self for a moment, but, on the entrance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, resumes his assumed manner.

258. **Thinking makes it so.** Compare—

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage.

—*Lovelace.*

311. **Moult no feather.** Suffer no loss of honor; lose none of their dignity. Allusion may be "to dislodgement of feathers from the helmets of knights at tilting matches."

320. **Congregation of vapours.** Collection of misty clouds hiding the face of the sun.

327. **Quintessence.** The fifth essence. (Lat., *quintus*, the fifth.) The ancients recognized four elements—earth, air, fire, and water. After these had been extracted from any substance, they supposed there remained the pure essence—the fifth.

344. **Tickled o' the sere.** This phrase describes persons easily moved to laughter. The metaphor is taken from the lock of a gun, the sere being the catch which prevents the hammer from falling, and which is released by the pulling of the trigger.

346. **The blank verse shall halt.** This may mean: (1) the lady shall have the full liberty to express herself even if she break the metre; (2) Elze suggests that it refers to the omission of oaths, forbidden by statute, which would spoil the metre.

353. **Inhibition.** An allusion to an occurrence which had taken place in England. Several companies of actors in Shakespeare's time had been deprived of their license to act in established theaters. The passage is often referred to in assigning the date of the play.

362. **Aiery of children.** Aiery = brood. A reference to the young singing lads of the Chapel Royal of St. Paul's, who performed plays to the detriment of the regular actors.

363. **Little eyases.** Nestlings or unfledged birds.

Cry out on the top of question. Shout out at the top of their voices.

366. **Common stages.** The theaters where the regular actors played.

379. **Tarre them to controversy.** Urge them on to quarrel, as one sets dogs on to fight.

387. **Hercules, and his load too.** Probably an allusion to the Globe Theater, the sign of which was Hercules carrying the globe. Shakespeare infers that the boys carried away much of the patronage of that theater.

392. **In little.** In miniature.

406. **Handsaw.** A corruption of "heron-saw," a heron.

419. **Roscius.** The most celebrated actor in Rome, B. C. 134-62. He was considered so perfect in his profession that it became the fashion to apply the name Roscius to anyone who had become particularly distinguished in dramatic art.

422. **Buz, buz!** Nonsense, nonsense.

424. **Then came each actor,** etc. Probably a line from some old ballad.

428. **Scene individable.** A play that observed the unities of place.

429. **Poem unlimited.** A play in which the unity of place was not observed.

Seneca. The famous Roman philosopher, tutor of Nero, and his chief adviser during the early part of his reign. He committed suicide at Nero's command, A. D. 65. He is here mentioned as the great authority on tragic drama.

430. **Plautus.** The celebrated Roman comic poet is mentioned as the greatest authority on comedy.

432. **O Jephthah,** etc. Jephthah was one of the judges of Israel, who delivered the people from the oppression of the Ammonites. He vowed to sacrifice to God the first thing to meet him on his return from battle, should he be victorious over the Ammonites. Upon his return he was met by his daughter. "He did to her what he had vowed to do."—*Judges xi:39*.

448. **Pious chanson.** A kind of Christmas carol, containing some Scripture story in loose rhymes. Usually sung in the streets.

452. **Valanced.** Fringed with a beard.

454. **Young lady.** Women's parts were played by boys.

456. **Chopine.** A high shoe worn by Venetian ladies to give them the appearance of being tall. The boy actors wore these to add to their height.

458. **Cracked within the ring.** "There was a ring or circle on the coin, within which the sovereign's head was placed; if the crack extended from the edge beyond this ring the coin was rendered unfit for currency."—*Douce*.

460. **French falconers.** Poor sportsmen. The French falconers were not particular what birds they shot, game or not game.

468. **Caviare to the general.** Caviare is the prepared roe of the Russian sturgeon. It is considered a delicacy by those of cultivated taste, but is not palatable to others. The meaning is, that the play was a treat to educated people, but was lost upon the general public.

470. **Cried in the top of mine.** Whose judgments had more authority than mine.

471. **Well digested in the scenes.** The scenes were well arranged so that the audience could readily follow the plot.

479. **Æneas.** In the *Æneid* of Virgil, this famous Trojan hero recounts to Dido, the queen of Carthage, the tale of the capture and destruction of Troy.

Dido. The founder and queen of Carthage. When Æneas, by the command of the gods, deserted her, she committed suicide.

483. **Pyrrhus.** The son of Achilles. In the siege of Troy he was one of those concealed in the wooden horse, and, when the city was captured, was ruthless in the slaughter of the Trojans.

Hyrceanian beast. The tiger, a native of Hyrcania, a country on the south and south-east shores of the Caspian Sea.

490. **Total gules.** All bloody. Gules, a term in heraldry = red.

Trick'd. A term in heraldry = a description by drawing or painting.

492. **Parching streets.** The heat from the burning houses had dried the blood of Pyrrhus.

495. **O'er-sized with coagulate gore.** Pyrrhus appears as if smeared with dried blood.

496. **Pyrrhus.** See note on l. 483 above.

497. **Priam.** King of Troy. When that city was captured by the Greeks he was slain by Pyrrhus, son of Achilles.

507. **Ilium.** Troy. So called from its founder, Ilus, son of Tros.

513. **Painted tyrant.** A tyrant in a picture. The sword is drawn but does not descend.

514. **Neutral.** Indifferent. His will is the one side; the matter, i. e. the sword stroke, the other.

522. **Cyclops.** The Cyclops were a mythical race of monsters living in Sicily. They were commanded by Polyphemus, and were assistants of Vulcan. As such they forged the armor of gods and heroes.

526. **Fortune.** The goddess Fortune.

528. **Fellies.** Felloes; the pieces of wood composing the rim of a wheel into which the spokes are inserted, and the whole bound together by the tire.

534. **Hecuba.** The wife of Priam, King of Troy, who was slain by Pyrrhus before her eyes.

536. **Mobled.** Muffled up.

564. **God's bodykins.** An oath, "by God's body."

605. **Muddy-mettled.** Dull spirited, irresolute.

606. **John-a-dreams.** John the dreamer.

616. **Pigeon-liver'd.** Timid as a pigeon. The liver was supposed to be the seat of courage and passion.

Gall. Courage.

619. **This slave's offal.** The King's refuse. Hamlet is reproaching himself for his lack of courage in not having slain the usurper, and given his dead body to the birds of prey.

ACT III. SCENE I

1. **Drift of circumstance.** Roundabout method.

43. **Gracious.** Polonius is now addressing the King.

48. **Sugar o'er.** Like a pill coated with sugar to make it pleasant to the palate, and to disguise its true taste.

62. **Rub.** Taken from the game of bowls. Any impediment or obstacle in the course of the bowl is termed a rub. (See Note II. i. 61.)

72. **Quietus.** A legal term denoting the acquittance given by the sheriff as the official discharge of an account.

73. **Bare bodkin.** A bodkin is an old term for a small dagger. Bare = unsheathed.

81. **Native hue.** Natural color.

83. **Pith.** Pitch, i. e. the highest point of a falcon's flight.

113. **Paradox.** An assertion contrary to general experience, usually contradictory in terms and apparently opposed to common sense.

148. **Amble.** To walk with mincing, effeminate steps.

149. **Nick-name.** Literally, an additional name. An *eke-name*, i. e. a name given to eke out another name.

158. **Glass of fashion.** The mirror in which was reflected all that was in the best taste.

Mould of form. The model for all others.

161. **Music vows.** Vows sweet as music to Ophelia's ears.

164. **Blown youth.** Full blown. Hamlet was in his prime, thirty years of age.

171. **Disclose.** The revelation. Brood, hatch, disclose, all refer to the hen hatching her chickens. "Disclose" is the technical term for the moment when the young bird peeps through the shell and discloses itself.

175. **Tribute.** Probably an allusion to the Danegelt, a tax originally levied in Saxon times to provide the money to buy off the Danish invaders. It was first levied in the reign of Ethelred the Unready, A. D. 994.

177. **Variable objects.** Variable = various. The king is suggesting that a change of scene will be the best cure for Hamlet's indisposition.

190. **Find him.** Find out his secret.

ACT III. SCENE II

11. **Periwig-pated.** Periwig (Fr. *perruque*), a wig. It was the custom for actors to wear wigs, though wigs did not come into general use till the reign of Charles II.

15. **Termagant.** An imaginary being supposed by the Crusaders to have been one of the Saracen deities. It was a character frequently represented in the mystery plays, and was conspicuously a ranting part. In these plays, the degree of rant was the measure of the wickedness portrayed.

16. **Herod.** King of Judæa. He was notorious for cruelty and tyranny. Herod was one of the principal characters in the old mystery plays, and was represented as a furious tyrant.

31. **In your allowance.** By your own admission.

38. **Journeymen.** Men working and paid by the day.

44. **Speak no more, etc.** It was the custom of the clown to improvise jokes (the modern "gag" in a play). Shakespeare is probably hitting at Tarleton, an actor of his day, who was notorious for his power of "gagging."

66. **Candied tongue.** Candied, coated over. The hypocrite's tongue coated with flattery.

75. **Blood and judgment.** "According to the doctrine of the four humours, desire and confidence were seated in the blood, and judgment in the phlegm, and the due mixtures of the humours made a perfect character."—*Johnson*.

82. **One scene.** The lines that Hamlet had written for the actors. See II. ii. 576, p. 124.

85. **The very comment of thy soul.** Observe the king with all your powers of observation.

87. **Unkennel.** Bring to light—i. e. as a dog is brought out of his kennel into the open.

90. **Vulcan.** The Roman god of fire. He is said to have had his workshop under Mount Aetna in Sicily. The Cyclops were his workmen.

Stithy. The forge or smithy of a blacksmith.

99. **The chameleon's dish.** The chameleon was popularly supposed to feed on air.

100. **Promise-crammed.** Stuffed with promises. Claudius had promised Hamlet that he should be "his son" (I. ii. 64), i. e. his heir to the throne.

105. **University.** An allusion to the practice of performing plays in the college halls.

111. **I' the Capitol.** Cæsar was not assassinated in the Capitol, but in the Curia Pompeii, at the foot of Pompey's statue. Shakespeare in the plays *Hamlet*, *Julius Cæsar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, alluding to Cæsar's death, places the scene of his murder in the Capitol.

Brutus. The chief of the conspirators against Cæsar. He was a descendant of the famous Brutus who headed the people against the Tarquins, destroyed kingly power, and established the Roman republic. Brutus with Cassius and other conspirators was defeated at Philippi by Antony and Octavius and perished in the battle.

125. **Jig-maker.** A composer or player of jigs. Jig was a ludicrous ballad, or a merry dance accompanying it.

132. **Suit of sables.** Hamlet intends to say that he will cast aside his suit of mourning and will wear magnificent garments trimmed with fur, and be dressed as the rest of the court.

138. **Hobby-horse.** A character in the May-games and Morris-dances. It was represented by a man with the figure of a horse fastened round his waist, the man's legs being concealed by a long foot-cloth.

141. **Miching mallecho.** Miching = skulking about for some sinister purpose. Mallecho = mischief. Hence, Miching mallecho = mischief or the spirit of mischief on the watch for an opportunity to do some one harm.

152. **Posy of a ring.** A motto in verse inscribed inside a ring.

156. **Phœbus.** The god of the sun. He was supposed to drive the chariot of the sun from east to west. Thirty times would indicate a full month.

157. **Tellus' orbèd ground.** The Greek goddess, Gæ or Ge, the personification of the earth. At Rome the earth was worshipped under the name of Tellus. Tellus' orbèd ground = the earth.

158. **Borrowed sheen.** The light of the moon. The moon shines by the reflected light of the sun.

160. **Hymen.** The god of marriage.

168. **Hold quantity.** Are in proportion.

171. **As my love is sized, etc.** My fear is in proportion to the quantity of my love.

217. **Anchor's cheer.** The fare of a hermit. Anchor (shortened form of "anchorite"), hermit.

235. **Mouse-trap.** Hamlet names the play thus because it is intended to entrap the guilty conscience of the king.

241. **Let the galled jade, etc.** A proverbial expression. The meaning is "Let the guilty fear." (See Glossary under *galled*.)

Withers. That part of the horse between the shoulders, which takes the strain off the collar, or supports the saddle.

244. **Chorus.** A character, as in the old Greek Plays, whose part it was to explain the action of the Play.

247. **Puppets** (Fr. *poupee*, a doll). The allusion is to puppet shows, common in Shakespeare's day. These were explained to the spectators by an interpreter, who sat upon the stage for that purpose. Hamlet cynically likens Ophelia and her lover to dolls.

253. **Confederate season.** Time or opportunity. The opportunity for the ill-deed is represented as aiding or assisting the murderer, and so becoming his accomplice.

255. **Hecate.** A mysterious divinity represented as a threefold goddess with three bodies or three heads. She is said to have been: (1) Selene or Luna in heaven; (2) Artemis or Diana on earth; (3) Proserpine or Proserpina in the lower world. From being an infernal deity she came to be regarded as a spectral being who taught sorcery and witchcraft.

260. **Extant.** In existence, and so a true story.

269. **Why, let the stricken deer go weep.** When badly wounded, the deer is said to retire from the herd to weep and die. So the king flees to hide his guilty face.

270. **The hart ungalled.** The uninjured deer. This represents Hamlet, who, innocent of crime, remains to enjoy the rest of the Play.

273. **This.** This Play of mine.

Forest of feathers. An allusion to the actors of Shakespeare's time, who wore gaudy dresses, and in their caps sported plumes of feathers.

274. **Turn Turk.** Change from Christian to infidel = to become a renegade or traitor. A common phrase of the period equivalent to the modern "go to the bad."

275. **Provincial roses.** Rosettes or ribbons worn on the shoes. The name is either from Provence or Provins, the latter about forty miles from Paris.

Razed shoes. Shoes cut to a distinctive pattern.

276. **A fellowship in a cry of players.** A partnership in a company of actors. Cry = a pack of hounds: hence "a theatrical company." The word is used in hunting to signify a pack of hounds chosen so that their united barking may make a musical cry.

277. **Half a share.** An allusion to the custom of the day, when actors were paid not by salaries, but by shares of the receipts, according to their abilities.

279. Damon. The reference is to the proverbial friendship of Damon and Pythias, who lived in the fourth century B. C. The latter plotted against the life of the tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse. He was condemned to die, and Damon offered to take his place till Pythias could arrange his affairs, and agreed to die should his friend not appear upon the day appointed. Pythias, delayed, did not arrive until a few moments before the hour of execution. Dionysius was so struck by the fidelity of the friends that he pardoned Pythias, and begged to be admitted into their friendship.

280. Realm dismantled. Hamlet suggests that Denmark had been robbed of a king (his father), who could be compared to Jove, and was replaced by his uncle, whom he styles a peacock.

281. Jove. Jupiter, the king of gods.

283. Rhymed. The rhyme to "was" (l. 280) would be "ass." Horatio suggests that this word would well describe Claudius.

284. The ghost's word. The conduct of the conscience-stricken Claudius has convinced Hamlet that the tale told him by his father's ghost is true.

290. Recorder. A kind of flageolet or flute. Here it refers to those playing upon that instrument.

306. Purgation. Here used in a double sense: (1) Legal, to clear oneself on oath; (2) Medical, adopted to cure the patient.

309. Frame. Connected order. The words "start not so wildly" and "tame" suggest an allusion to the tying in a frame of a restive horse when it is being shod.

341. Pickers and stealers. These hands. "To keep my hands from picking and stealing."

344. You bar the door, etc. You deny yourself freedom from your sorrows by refusing to tell your cause of grief to your friend.

354. Go about. Attempt.

To recover the wind. A hunting term. The hunter lays his snare to the leeward of the game. Then, from the windward side, he stalks the animal, which scenting him endeavors to escape to leeward, and is snared.

366. Ventages. The air-holes in the pipe of the recorder. *Stops* (l. 359) signifies the stopping of the holes with the fingers, thus producing the different notes on the instrument.

380. 'Sblood. An oath, "God's blood."

392. Backed like a weasel. Its back is shaped like the back of a weasel. Polonius is so bent on humoring Hamlet that he pretends to see a likeness to the back of a weasel in the hump of a camel.

396. **They fool me to the top of my bent.** They humor me in whatever I say. Hamlet is thus assured that he is regarded as being mad. It is a common practice in the treatment of lunatics to appear to agree with everything they say, in order to soothe, not irritate them.

407. **Soul of Nero.** Nero, the infamous Roman emperor, a monster of vice and cruelty. He gained his imperial purple through the intrigues of his mother, Agrippina, who exercised great influence and authority during the early years of his reign. Nero, becoming weary of his mother's influence, and urged by his mistress, Poppaea, caused Agrippina to be assassinated. Hamlet prays lest his wrath at his own father's murder should lead him to follow Nero's example and put the queen, his mother, to death.

412. **Give them seals.** To affix seals to a document is to give it legal validity. So Hamlet prays that he may not in impulse be led to give effect to his words by committing the crime of matricide.

ACT III. SCENE III

11. **Single and peculiar life.** Single life, the life of an individual. Peculiar life, that he is a private person, with no public issues dependent upon his life. Rosenerantz is comparing Hamlet, a private individual, with the king, upon whose life the whole state, in a certain degree, depends.

15. **The cease of majesty.** The king dying.

20. **Mortised.** Joined with a mortise. To mortise is to cut out a portion of one piece of wood to receive a corresponding portion called the *tenon* or holder of another piece. Thus the two pieces are firmly united to each other.

21. **Annexment.** That which is annexed. A word not found elsewhere in Shakespeare.

24. **Arm you.** Prepare yourselves.

25. **Fear.** Hamlet, the cause of the king's fear.

30. **Process.** The full recital.

Tax him home. Thoroughly probe or examine him, and get the whole truth out of it.

34. **Of vantage.** From a position of advantage. Polonius will have the advantage of Hamlet in being able from his place of concealment to hear all that passes between Hamlet and his mother.

38. **Primal eldest curse.** The curse of Cain. Cain was the eldest son of Adam, and the first murderer.

62. **The action lies.** A legal phrase meaning "there is ground for commencing the suit at law."

64. **Even to the teeth,** etc. Face to face with.

69. **Limed soul.** A soul entangled in sin, as a bird caught in bird-lime. The more it struggles the more it becomes smeared with the sticky substance.

81. **Full of bread.** Not fasting.

84. **In our circumstance.** Judging from the circumstances, and according to our usual way of reasoning.

ACT III. SCENE IV

4. **I'll silence me e'en here.** I'll stop talking at this point (though I could say more).

23. **Dead, for a ducat.** I will wager a ducat that he is dead.

25. **Is it the king?** Hamlet naturally thinks it is the king who has concealed himself behind the tapestry. He acts upon impulse, but it is clear (see l. 32) he intends to kill his uncle.

36. **Penetrable.** Capable of receiving moral impressions.

37. **Braz'd.** Become hard like brass.

38. **Proof.** Impenetrable.

44. **Sets a blister.** Brands as a wanton. Such persons were liable to be branded on the forehead.

48. **Rhapsody of words.** Confused utterance of words.

52. **Index.** Prologue or preface to a play. The index was formerly placed at the beginning of a book, not at the end.

57. **Mars.** The Roman god of war. Hamlet gives his father a martial appearance in thus likening him to the god of war.

58. **Mercury.** The herald of the gods, and as such regarded as the god of eloquence. Mercury's principal articles of attire were: (1) a helmet; (2) a herald's staff; (3) golden sandals, provided with wings at the ankles, which carried the god across land and sea with the rapidity of the wind. Hamlet represents his father as having the graceful pose of the god Mercury.

59. **Heaven-kissing.** Reaching to the clouds.

69. **Hey-day.** Frolicsome wildness.

77. **Hoodman-blind.** Blindman's buff.

97. **A Vice of kings.** The Vice was one of the characters in the Morality Plays. He acted the part of the buffoon, and supplied the comic element. He was so named from the vicious or mischievous qualities attributed to him. He wore a motley or patch-work dress. The fool

or clown in later plays was developed from the Vice of these old Morality Plays. So "Vice of kings" = a buffoon or clownish king.

98. **Cutpurse.** A thief. The purse was worn outside, attached to the girdle. Thieves cut the purse away from the girdles.

101. **A king of shreds and patches.** Referring to the motley dress worn by the Vice (l. 97).

Enter Ghost. A stage direction. When the Ghost first appeared to Hamlet he was visible to others before he was seen by him. Now he is seen by Hamlet alone. So the ghost of Banquo appears to Macbeth only.

133. **Habit.** Note the differences between this appearance and the former visits of the Ghost. At the castle he appears to those on guard as well as to Hamlet; he is clad in complete armor, and stalks away. Now he appears to Hamlet alone, is clad in royal garb, and steals away.

143. **Flattering unction.** Soothing ointment.

171. **Their scourge and minister.** Their = of heaven. Scourge = the instrument to inflict the punishment decreed by heaven. Minister = the servant to obey heaven's commands.

183. **Faddock.** A toad. Hamlet compares the queen's telling the king what had taken place to the custom of witches consulting toads, bats, and cats.

Gib. A tomcat. It is a contraction of Gilbert, and was a name often given to a cat.

187. **The famous ape.** An allusion to some fable well known in Shakespeare's time, but now forgotten. From the text we gather that it is a fable concerning an ape which, having seen birds fly out of a basket on a housetop, tried to imitate them and broke his neck.

188. **To try conclusions.** To make experiment.

197. **Mandate.** The commission of the king entrusted to Rosen-crantz and Guildenstern to be taken to England.

200. **Petard.** A kind of mortar used for blowing open gates and doors. Hamlet pictures the engineer whose duty it was to place the petard in position against the gate, as being blown up by the premature explosion of his own petard.

ACT IV. SCENE I

1. **Matter.** Some important reason causing the sighs.

3. **Your son.** Yours (the queen's), not mine (the king's).

11. **Brainish apprehension.** Crazy notion.

18. **Kept short.** On a short tether, under strict guard.

Out of haunt. Apart from his companions, or away from the usual haunts of men.

42. Blank. The mark or target. The mark in the target would be painted white.

ACT IV. SCENE II

12. Demanded of. Questioned by.

13. Sponge. Taken from a saying of the Emperor Vespasian who, when found fault with for the appointment of rapacious officers, replied that he served his turn with such officers as with sponges, which, when they had absorbed their fill, were fittest to be pressed.

26. A knavish speech, etc. This has become a proverb.

33. Hide fox, etc. This is said to have been a name for the game of "hide and seek."

ACT IV. SCENE III

21. Politic worms. An allusion to the famous Diet of Worms, before which Martin Luther was summoned to appear, A. D. 1521.

25. Variable. Various, referring to the different courses of a dinner.

33. Progress. The technical term for a royal journey of state.

40. Lobby. A passage or waiting room.

47. At help. Ready to help, i. e. favorable.

52. I see a cherub, etc. This has been variously interpreted: (1) The modern saying, A little bird told me; (2) I have an inkling of your intentions; (3) The angels are fighting on my side.

61. That else leans on the affair. That the affair depends on.

65. Free awe. The superior might of Denmark is now freely acknowledged by England.

66. Coldly set. Regarded with indifference.

68. Congruing. Calling upon him to do our bidding.

ACT IV. SCENE IV

15. The main. Either (1) the mainland of Poland, or (2) the main body of the Polish forces.

21. Sold in fee. This means an absolute sale conveying all rights in the land.

35. Large discourse. A wide range of intelligence and power of reason.

39. Bestial oblivion. Forgetfulness, worthy only of an animal.

49. Invisible event. An issue that cannot be foreseen.

63. Continent. That which holds or contains anything.

ACT IV. SCENE V

9. **Collection, etc.** To gather up the disjointed remarks of Ophelia and to endeavor to guess at their meaning.

15. **Ill-breeding minds.** Minds ready to conceive mischief.

25. **Cockle hat and staff, etc.** Alluding to the dress of a pilgrim. The cockle shell was worn in the hat as an emblem of one's intention to go to the Holy Land.

38. **True-love showers.** Tears showered upon his grave by those who truly loved him.

40. **God 'ield you.** God reward you.

41. **A baker's daughter.** The reference is to a tradition, current in Gloucestershire, that our Savior one day entered a baker's shop and asked for bread. The mistress offered Him a loaf, but the daughter objected that it was too large. She offered Him a small one, which, however, began to swell, and became very large. At that moment, too, the daughter assumed the shape of an owl, as a punishment for her miserly conduct.

43. **Conceit upon.** Thought of.

48. **Saint Valentine.** A Roman priest, who befriended the martyrs in the persecution under Claudius II., and in consequence was arrested, beaten with clubs, and finally beheaded, Feb. 14, 270.

58. **My coach.** I. e. calling for her carriage. An anachronism.

64. **Single spies.** Singly, one by one, as spies, not in companies.

70. **Hugger-mugger.** Secretly, hurriedly, and without ceremony.

81. **Murdering-piece.** The name given to a cannon or mortar when loaded with case shot, and which scattered bullets when fired, thus wounding many by a single discharge.

83. **My Switzers.** My bodyguard. An allusion to the practice of the French kings in employing Swiss soldiers as their bodyguard. An anachronism.

85. **List.** A barrier or boundary enclosing a space, and intended to prevent spectators encroaching on the ground railed off.

87. **Riotous head.** Head = an armed force. Laertes is at the head of an armed rabble.

96. **Counter.** A hunting term descriptive of hounds taking up a false trail, or running back upon the true one.

106. **There's such divinity, etc.** The King faces Laertes in a dignified manner, secure, as he thinks, by Hamlet's absence. He talks with calm assurance, asserting the divine rights of kings. The Queen

staunchly upholds her consort. She seizes Laertes to prevent his striking the King, and asserts that the charge is false, for, of course, she knows Hamlet had slain Polonius.

115. **Conscience and grace.** Morals and religion.

117. **Both the worlds.** I. e. this world and the next. Laertes casts off all ties of duty in both worlds—viz., “his allegiance,” and “vows” of fealty to the king in this world, “conscience and grace” in the next.

120. **My will.** This may mean: (1) Only by the accomplishment of my purpose, or (2) My own change of purpose, for nothing else shall stay me.

125. **Sweepstake.** A wager where the winner sweeps in all the money staked.

129. **Life-rendering.** Giving up its own life. It was an old belief that the pelican pierced its breast and fed its young on its own blood.

154. **The wheel.** Ophelia is uttering snatches of old ballads sung to the spinning wheel.

158ff. We may note how Ophelia suits the flowers to the several persons: to Laertes she gives rosemary and pansies (remembrance and thoughts); to the King, fennel and columbine (flattery and ingratitude); to the Queen, rue (sorrow); to Hamlet, who is not present, daisies (unfaithfulness).

161. **Document.** A lesson, instruction, example.

166. **With a difference.** An heraldic term denoting the slight change in a coat-of-arms to distinguish the different members of the same family. The phrase is intended to point out that Ophelia and the Queen have different causes for their respective sorrows: Ophelia mourns for her dead father; the Queen will meet with sorrow in punishment for her hasty marriage.

170. **Bonny sweet Robin.** A well-known ballad on Robin Hood.

197. **Hatchment.** An escutcheon. Knights and persons of rank were buried with great ceremony, and “the sword, the helmet, the gauntlet, spurs, and tabard were hung over the tomb.”

198. **Formal ostentation.** Customary ceremony.

ACT IV. SCENE VI

11. **Let to know.** Informed.

27. **Bore of the matter.** Bore refers to some large piece of ordnance, discharging a heavy shot. Hamlet suggests that his words are too light for the occasion, like shot too small for the barrel of a large cannon.

ACT IV. SCENE VII

7. **Capital.** Deserving the death penalty.

10. **Unsinew'd.** Without nerve or sinew, and so lacking strength, sufficient for the purpose.

15. **Sphere.** An allusion to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy which supposed the universe to be composed of hollow spheres, one within another.

20. **Spring.** A reference to lime springs. These springs being impregnated with lime deposit a coating on substances placed therein, and so apparently petrify or turn them into stone.

21. **Gyves.** Fetters for the ankles.

22. **Too slightly timbered.** An arrow with too slender and light a shaft, so that its flight is strongly affected by the wind.

28. **Stood challenger.** "The allusion must be to the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Germany. While being crowned King of Hungary, on the Mount of Defiance at Presburg, he unsheathes the ancient sword of state and shaking it toward north, south, east, and west, challenges the four corners of the earth to dispute his rights."—*Moberly*.

46. **More strange.** The return was sudden, and that was strange; but the strangest thing to the King's mind was that Hamlet should return at all.

50. **Naked.** Either (1) alone, without attendants, or (2) having lost all his possessions.

61. **Checking.** A metaphor taken from falconry. The falcon was said to "check" if it left the proper game to fly after some other bird.

72. **Parts. Qualities.** The King means that Hamlet did not envy Laertes all his good qualities, but only his skill as a fencer.

75. **Siege. Seat.** Unworthiest siege means "of lowest rank," i. e. taking the lowest seat at table.

86. **Incorpsed and demi-natured.** Descriptive of a good horseman, who sits his horse as if he were part of him.

92. **Brooch.** Any conspicuous ornament.

95. **Masterly report.** He reported you a master of the art of fencing.

116. **Plurisy.** This word must not be confounded with pleurisy, an affection of the pleura. *Plurisy* is derived from Latin *plus*, more, and signifies "excess" "too much."

121. **Spendthrift sigh.** A sigh that wastes the vital flame.

122. **That hurts by easing.** The sigh relieved the mind, but according to the popular notion, injured the strength of the body.

126. **Sanctuarize.** To be a shelter or protection to a murderer. Certain religious places were privileged to give protection to those who took refuge there.

143. **Simples.** Herbs.

150. **Look through.** Show itself.

153. **Blast in proof.** Burst in the test, as a cannon.

159. **For the nonce.** For the occasion.

166. **Hoar leaves.** The silver-gray underside of willow leaves.

172. **Sliver.** A branch broken off a tree.

ACT V. SCENE I

2. **Wilfully.** The body of one who has committed suicide is buried without the ceremonies of the Church.

4. **Crowner.** Coroner, i. e. an officer under the Crown.

9. **Se offendendo.** The clown's mistake for *se defendendo*, which is the verdict in the case of justifiable homicide. *Se offendendo* means "by attacking himself," and so describes an act of suicide.

12. **Three branches.** The clown defines the three parts of any deed: (1) The inception in the mind. (2) The resolution to act. (3) The actual performance.

14. **Goodman delver.** The first clown is the sexton proper, the second is his assistant, a mere laborer employed to dig the graves.

24. **Crowner's quest.** Coroner's inquest.

35. **Hold up.** Continue.

Adam's profession. I. e. that of a gardener, and so a "delver" or digger.

"When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman?"

59. **Unyoke.** An expression borrowed from husbandry. When the day's work is done the team is unyoked or unharnessed. So the phrase means "then your task of guessing can be regarded as completed."

68. **Yaughan.** An alehouse near the Globe Theater was kept by a Jew named Johan. It is suggested that "Yaughan" is a corruption of this name.

69. **In youth, etc.** This verse which is inaccurately rendered is taken from "The Aged Lover Renounceth Love," in *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557.

76. **Property of easiness.** Long custom in burying the dead had rendered the gravedigger indifferent to the mournful task.

85. **Cain's jaw-bone.** An allusion to the old tradition that Cain slew his brother Abel with the jaw-bone of an ass.

87. **O'er-reaches.** In the sense of "goes beyond," "surpasses." Hamlet means that the humble gravedigger is now the superior of the dead politician. It may also mean "reaches over for," in order to put it back into the ground.

96. **My Lady Worm's.** This skull which was once my Lord such-a-one's (l. 92) is now my Lady Worm's.

101. **Loggats.** Diminutive of log, a small piece of wood. Loggats was a game which somewhat resembled bowls.

120. **Pair of indentures.** Such agreements are always drawn up and signed in duplicate, each party to the agreement retaining a copy.

152. **By the card.** Precisely or exactly, taking this meaning from: (1) A ship's chart, which would be accurately drawn; or (2) A card of etiquette, containing precise instructions on behavior; or (3) The actor's card on which his part was exactly written out.

180. **Thirty years.** This makes Hamlet thirty. But at the beginning of the play it is clear that Shakespeare thinks of him as much younger. Such inconsistencies in the reckoning of time are common in Shakespeare, who in such matters cares only for dramatic effect.

225. **Alexander.** Son of Philip, King of Macedon. His conquests over the Persians and in Asia Minor gained for him the name of Alexander the Great. Born B. C. 356; died B. C. 323.

250. **Doubtful.** I. e. no evidence to show if Ophelia's death had been accidental or that she had committed suicide.

252. **Unsanctified.** Unconsecrated. Alluding to the ancient practice of refusing suicides burial in consecrated ground.

256. **Strewments.** Strewing her grave with flowers.

The bringing home. The body of Ophelia is carried to the grave (her last home), to the sad tolling of the funeral bell, as a bride is welcomed to her home by the merry chiming of the wedding bells.

276. **Pelion.** A lofty range of mountains in Thessaly. Near the summit was the cave of the centaur Chiron. On Pelion was felled the timber, with which the ship *Argo* was built.

299. **Esil.** Various interpreted as: 1. The name of some river, as a. The Yssel, a branch of the Rhine; b. The Weissel. c. The Nile, suggested by the mention of the crocodiles. 2. Eisel = Vinegar.

306. **Ossa like a wart.** Cause a mountain to appear no larger than a wart. Ossa, a celebrated mountain in Thessaly, was connected with Pelion on the S. E., and divided from Olympus on the N. W. by the Vale of Tempe.

310. **Golden couplets.** The dove lays but two eggs. On leaving the shell the young are covered with golden down.

Disclosed. The technical term for the coming out of the young bird from the shell; the equivalent of "born."

320. **Living monument.** The king may be referring to an enduring monument to be placed over the grave, or he may mean that the death of Hamlet shall be metaphorically the monument.

ACT V. SCENE II

6. **Mutines in the bilboes.** Mutines, mutineers. Bilboes, the name for the ship's prison, and also for the stocks of fetters used on board ship.

11. **Rough-hew.** I. e. as a carpenter first works a piece of timber, before finally planing and smoothing it to exact shape.

13. **Scarfed.** A verb formed from the noun.

36. **Yeoman's service.** The Yeomen (see Glossary) were the small freeholders of England. The allusion is to the part taken by English yeomen as archers and infantry in the wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The phrase has become proverbial for "good and faithful service."

42. **A comma 'tween their amities.** Blending, close connection between England and Denmark. The idea is connection not separation. "A comma is the note of connection and continuity of sentences; the period is the note of abruption and disjunction."—*Johnson*.

47. **Not shriving-time allowed.** I. e. their death was immediate, with no time even for confession.

53. **Changeling never known.** Hamlet compares the substitution of his letter for that of the King to the supposed practice of fairies, who were believed to take away very beautiful children at their birth, and to replace them with ugly ones. The child brought by the fairy was termed a changeling.

77. **Image of my cause.** Hamlet can sympathize with Laertes in his grief and indignation, for he knows him to be in a similar case to himself. Hamlet had lost his father, murdered; so had Laertes lost his father, Polonius. Both Hamlet and Laertes mourned for Ophelia, the one for his love, and the other for his sister.

84. **Water-fly.** A fly which skims up and down a stream, descriptive of Osric, a mere trifler or hanger on at Court.

96. **Your bonnet to its right use.** Put on your cap, and do not stand before me uncovered like an obsequious courtier.

114. **Great showing.** Fine appearance.

115. **Card or calendar.** Johnson points out the distinction between the card and the calendar: Card or chart, by which to direct his conduct; calendar, by which to choose his time.

159. **Hangers.** The straps by which the sword is attached to the belt.

177. **Twelve for nine.** The terms of the wager. The King wagers that Laertes will hit Hamlet twelve times before Hamlet will hit Laertes nine times.

184. **Breathing time of day.** The time of day taken up in exercise.

196. **Lapwing.** The lapwing is said to run away before it is entirely out of its shell. The figure, as used here, is not exactly clear. It refers, perhaps, to Osric's forwardness. Hamlet terms Osric a lapwing; i. e., calls him a forward fellow.

200. **Outward habit of encounter.** Outside polish of manner, veneer of courtesy.

201. **Yesty collection.** Frothy opinions gathered from anywhere.

202. **Carries them through.** Wins them the approval of.

211. **Fitness speaks.** Convenience summons.

216. **In happy time.** Just at the right time to witness our fencing match.

218. **Gentle entertainment.** Gracious treatment.

224. **At the odds.** I. e. of 12 to 9 (l. 177). Good fencer though Laertes be, Hamlet is confident he can meet him on the above terms.

289. **An union.** A very precious pearl. (See Glossary.) To swallow a pearl in a draught of wine was an extravagance not uncommon in ancient times.

They change rapiers. A stage direction. This is brought about differently by various actors. (1) Mutual disarmament, each picking up the nearest rapier and thus getting his opponent's weapon. (2) Hamlet disarms Laertes and then courteously offers Laertes his own weapon. (3) Laertes rushes into close quarters and seizes Hamlet's rapier by the hilt. The proper way to meet this attack would be for Hamlet to seize the hilt of Laertes' sword, thus the exchange is made.

320. **Have at you.** I'll begin, I'll hit you.

353. **Mutes.** Silent spectators. Most of the courtiers were, of course, in ignorance of the plot against Hamlet's life.

358. **The unsatisfied.** I. e. those who could not understand Hamlet's action in stabbing the King. The dying Hamlet entreats Horatio to explain his action so that all may see what cause he had for the deed.

359. **Roman.** An allusion to the Romans of old, who preferred death to a life of disgrace, e. g., Cato.

362. **Wounded name.** Unless the truth is known my name will live forever stained with the crime of the king's assassination.

382. **Cries on.** Cried out.

399. **Unnatural acts.** The murder of Hamlet's father, the hasty marriage of his mother, the plots of the King against Hamlet.

400. **Accidental judgments.** The death of Polonius, stabbed by Hamlet in mistake for the King, the death of the Queen on drinking the poisoned cup intended for Hamlet.

Casual slaughters. The deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

401. **Cunning.** The death of Laertes, his own device recoiling on himself.

Forced. The death of the King, well merited by his crimes.

402. **Upshot.** A term in archery—the last shot. The death of Hamlet was the final act in the drama of murder and death.

407. **Rights of memory.** Rights which the Danes must remember are well founded. Fortinbras is alluding to his claim to succeed to the throne of Denmark, now that both the King and Hamlet are dead.

GRAMMATICAL NOTES

On reading the works of Elizabethan authors we wonder at the many points of difference in grammar and meaning between their English and the English of today. Yet, there is really no cause for surprise. The great "renascence" had just taken place, and the ancient classics were being studied in England as they had never before been studied. Changes in structure and meaning in the language of Chaucer were demanded and introduced, but as old prejudices die hard the result for a time was chaos. Neither the devotees of the old forms nor the advocates of the new would give way, so both reigned, but neither was supreme. Language is given to interpret thought, and the result of the conflict between the old and the new was a language clear in thought but doubtful in expression. Such must be the conditions in all transitional periods. Hence, though the Elizabethan English differs in many respects from the English of today, it was and is intelligible. The change from the old styles through the Elizabethan English, to our present forms was slow indeed, but changes that are to endure are not wrought in a generation.

In this may be found the *raison d'être* of the so-called grammatical difficulties of Shakespeare. Besides, in those days printed books were less common than they are now, and even today spoken language is frequently less grammatical than that which is written.

ADJECTIVES USED AS ADVERBS

'Tis *bitter* cold (I. i. 8). Bitterly.

Goes *slow* and stately by them (I. ii. 201). Slowly.

Very *like* (I. ii. 235). Likely.

New-hatch'd (I. iii. 65). Newly-hatched.

How *prodigal* the soul lends the tongue vows (I. iii. 116). Prodiggally.

Grow not *instant* old (I. v. 76). Instantly.

This is *wondrous* strange (I. v. 146). Wonderfully.

You shall do *marvellous* wisely, good Reynaldo (II. i. 3). Marvellously.

I went *round* to work (II. ii. 140). Roundly.

You say *right* (II. ii. 415). Rightly.

We'll have a speech *straight* (II. ii. 461). Straightway.

I am myself *indifferent* honest (III. i. 121). Fairly.

Or come *tardy* off (III. ii. 28). Tardily.
Excellent i' faith (III. ii. 99). Excellently.
 He will come *straight* (III. iv. 1). Straightway.
New-lighted (III. iv. 59). *Newly-lighted*.
 Speak *fair*, and bring the body (IV. i. 36). Fairly, openly.
 Follow her *close* (IV. v. 61). Closely.
 It shall as *level* to your judgment pierce (IV. v. 134). Directly.
 And do't the *speedier* (IV. vi. 33). The more speedily.
 It falls *right* (IV. vii. 69). Rightly.
 It is *indifferent* cold (V. ii. 101). Indifferently.

ADJECTIVES USED AS NOUNS

A list of lawless *resolutes* (I. i. 98). Resolute men.
 I shall in all my *best* obey you (I. ii. 120). Best efforts.
 In the dead *vast* and middle of the night (I. ii. 197). Vastness.
 In *few*, Ophelia (I. iii. 126). Few words.
 'Twas caviare to the *general* (II. ii. 468). The majority.
 Each toy seems prologue to some great *amiss* (IV. v. 18). Misfortune.

ADJECTIVES USED AS VERBS

And 'gins to *pale* his uneffectual fire (I. v. 72). To make pale.
 All his visage *wann'd* (II. ii. 591). Became wan.
 We *fat* all creatures else to *fat* us (IV. iii. 23). Fatten.
 But since he is *better'd* (V. ii. 280). Has improved.

NOUNS USED AS ADJECTIVES

Maiden presence (I. iii. 121).
Region kites (II. ii. 618).
Music vows (III. i. 161).
Mountain snow (IV. v. 34).
Coronet weeds (IV. vii. 171).

NOUNS USED AS ADVERBS

We doubt it *nothing* (I. ii. 41). Not at all.
 This *something* settled matter (III. i. 178). Somewhat.
 Discomfort you, my lord, it *nothing* must (III. ii. 167). In no wise.

NOUNS USED AS VERBS

Sharked up a list of lawless resolute (I. i. 98).
 To *business* with the king (I. ii. 37).

Cast thy *nighted* colour off (I. ii. 68).

The heavens shall *bruit* again (I. ii. 127). Resound.

Look thou *character* (I. iii. 59). Engrave.

It doth *posset* and *curd* (I. v. 52).

We do *sugar* o'er the devil himself (III. i. 48).

It *out-herods* Herod (III. ii. 16).

You shall *nose* him as you go up the stairs (IV. iii. 39). Smell.

Repast them with my blood (IV. v. 130). Feed them on.

My sea-gown *scarfed* about me (V. ii. 13). Wrapped about me as a scarf.

VERBS USED AS NOUNS

Without the sensible and true *avouch* (I. i. 57).

INTRANSITIVE VERBS USED TRANSITIVELY

So nightly *toils* the subject of the land (I. i. 72). Makes the subject to toil.

If with too credent ear you *list* his songs (I. iii. 30). Listen to.

Haste me to know 't (I. v. 29). Make haste to acquaint me with it.

VERBS USED AS ADJECTIVES

As *hush* as death (II. ii. 519).

ABSTRACT WORDS USED IN A CONCRETE SENSE

Needful in our *loves* (I. i. 173). On account of our love.

Your better *wisdoms* (I. ii. 15). Judgment.

You cannot speak of *reason* (I. ii. 44). Name a reasonable request.

My *necessaries* are embark'd (I. iii. 1). Needful things.

Between you and your *love* (III. ii. 245). Lover.

'Tis meet that some more *audience* than a mother (III. iii. 32). Persons hearing.

With this *contagion* (IV. vii. 146). Poisonous drug.

OMISSION OF THE RELATIVE

That father lost (I. ii. 90). Who was.

And they in France (I. iii. 73). That are.

What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you (I. iii. 88)? That.

Your party in converse, him you would sound (II. i. 40). Whom.

And all we mourn for (II. ii. 152). Whom.

Those ills we have (III. i. 78). Which.

To draw apart the body he hath kill'd (IV. i. 24). Which.
 That we would do (IV. vii. 117). Which.
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence (IV. vii. 130). Who.
 The fame the Frenchman gave you (IV. vii. 131). Which.
 There is a willow grows aslant a brook (IV. vii. 165). Which.
 The corse they follow (V. i. 243). Which.

OMISSION OF THE SUBJECT

Sends out arrests (II. ii. 67). He.
 And now remains (II. ii. 100). It.
 But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof (III. i. 8). He.
 None wed the second but who kill'd the first (III. ii. 181). He.

OMISSION OF VERB OF MOTION

Away, I do beseech you, both away (II. ii. 171). Go.
 Shall we to the court (II. ii. 274). Go.
 He shall with speed to England (III. i. 174). Go.
 Shall along with you (III. iii. 4). Go.
 I must to England (III. iv. 193). Go.

THE DOUBLE NEGATIVE

It is not, *nor* it *cannot* come to good (I. ii. 157).
Nor no matter in the phrase (II. ii. 475).
Nor 'tis not strange (III. ii. 198).
Nor did you *nothing* hear (III. iv. 131).
Not this, by *no* means, that I bid you do (III. iv. 177).

DOUBLE COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

Come you *more nearer* (II. i. 11).
O most best, believe it (II. ii. 122).
 Show itself *more richer* (III. ii. 304).
 The *worser* part of it (III. iv. 155).
More rawer breath (V. ii. 131).

FREQUENT USE OF THE NOMINATIVE ABSOLUTE

Yet now, I must confess, *that duty done* (I. ii. 54).
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own (I. iii. 17).
 The friends thou hast, *and their adoption tried* (I. iii. 62).
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies (III. ii. 202). Sup-
 ply *being*.

Else no creature seeing (III. ii. 253).
No leisure bated (V. ii. 23).
The changeling never known (V. ii. 53).
The gentleman willing (V. ii. 185).
Things standing thus unknown (V. ii. 363).

His FOR "ITS"

Nor any unproportion'd thought *his* act (I. iii. 60).
 Since nature cannot choose *his* origin (I. iv. 26).
 The dram of base . . . to *his* own scandal (I. iv. 36).
 As level as the cannon to *his* blank (IV. i. 42).
 Acts little of *his* will (IV. v. 108).
 That, as the star moves not but in *his* sphere (IV. vii. 15).
 Than settled age *his* sables and *his* weeds (IV. vii. 79).
 Did Hamlet so envenom with *his* envy (IV. vii. 102).
 There is a willow . . . that shows *his* hoar leaves (IV. vii. 165).

SINGULAR VERB WITH PLURAL SUBJECT

For on his choice *depends* the safety and health of the whole state (I. iii. 20-21).
 His sickness, age, and impotence, *was* falsely borne in hand (II. ii. 66, 67).
 There's letters sealed (III. iv. 195).
 Your fat king, and your lean beggar, *is* but variable service (IV. iii. 24, 25).
 There's tricks i' the world (IV. v. 5).
 There *is* pansies, that's for thoughts, etc. (IV. v. 159).
 That's two of his weapons (V. ii. 155).

PLURAL VERB WITH SINGULAR SUBJECT

More than the scope
 Of these dilated articles *allow* (I. ii. 37, 38).
 Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
 But *fall*, unshaken, when they mellow be (III. ii. 188, 189).
 The violence of either grief or joy
 Their own enactures with themselves *destroy* (III. ii. 194, 195).

ARCHAIC FORMS OF THE PAST PARTICIPLE

It would be *spoke* to (I. i. 45). Spoken.
 Our state to be *disjoint* and out of frame (I. ii. 20). Disjointed.

We have here *writ* (I. ii. 27). Written. See also I. ii. 221 and IV. v. 124.

Who, impotent and *bed-rid* (I. ii. 29). Bed-ridden.

But that I am *forbid* (I. v. 13). Forbidden.

There *o'ertook* in's rouse (II. i. 56). Overtaken.

Meantime, we thank you for your *well-took* labour (II. ii. 83). Well-taken.

And I, of ladies most *deject* and wretched (III. i. 160). Dejected.

For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is *forgot* (III. ii. 138). Forgotten.

See also III. iv. 194.

That hath *eat* of a king (IV. iii. 29). Eaten.

The doors are *broke* (IV. v. 97). Broken.

That we can let our beard be *shook* with danger (IV. vii. 32). Shaken.

COMPOUND WORDS

Elizabethan writers freely coined compound words.

By their oppress'd and *fear-surprisèd* eyes (I. ii. 202).

And the swaggering *up-spring* reels (I. iv. 9).

Most *lazar-like* (I. v. 56).

And *down-gyvèd* to his ankle (II. i. 76).

A dull and *muddy-mettled* rascal (II. ii. 605).

But I am *pigeon-liver'd* (II. ii. 616).

To hear a robustious *periwig-pated* fellow (III. ii. 10).

It *out-herods* Herod (III. ii. 16).

New-lighted on a *heaven-kissing* hill (III. iv. 59).

And, like the kind *life-rendering* pelican (IV. v. 129).

As he had been incorpsed and *demi-natured* (IV. vii. 86).

As to *peace-parted* souls (V. i. 261).

Like *wonder-wounded* hearers (V. i. 280).

Three *liberal-conceited* carriages (V. ii. 171).

But it is such a kind of *gain-giving* (V. ii. 229).

WORDS WHICH HAVE CHANGED IN MEANING

Of *unimprovèd* metal hot and full (I. i. 96). Untutored.

It shows a will most *incorrect* to heaven (I. ii. 95). Unsubmissive.

Set your *entreatments* at a higher rate (I. iii. 122). Favors.

With arms *encumbered* thus (I. v. 156). Folded.

Their own *enactures* with themselves destroy (III. ii. 195). Resolutions.

As from the body of *contraction* plucks (III. iv. 46). Marriage.

More than their *even* Christian (V. i. 32). Fellow.

To keep my name *ungored* (V. ii. 266). Unstained.

WORDS WHICH HAVE CHANGED IN FORM

- He smote the sledded *Polack* on the ice (I. i. 63). Pole.
 Thereto spurr'd on by a most *emulate* pride (I. i. 83). Emulous.
 And even the like *precurse* of fierce events (I. i. 121). Precursor.
 Unto our *climatures* and countrymen (I. i. 125). Climates.
 Holding a weak *supposal* of our worth (I. ii. 18). Estimate.
 Nor windy *suspiration* of forced breath (I. ii. 79). Sighs.
 The perfume and *suppliance* of a minute (I. iii. 9). That which supplies.
 Contagious *blastments* are most imminent (I. iii. 42). Blights.
 And 'gins to pale his *uneffectual* fire (I. v. 72). Ineffectual.
 What *Danskers* are in Paris (II. i. 7). Danes.
 Baked and *impasted* with the parching streets (II. ii. 492). Made into
 a paste.
 The *cease* of majesty (III. iii. 15). Decease.
 Each small *annexment* (III. iii. 21). What is annexed.
 That sense is *apoplex'd* (III. iv. 73). Stricken with apoplexy.
 If thou canst *mutine* in a matron's bones (III. iv. 83). Cause a mutiny.
 And hit the *woundless* air (IV. i. 44). Incapable of being wounded.
 No place, indeed, should murder *sanctuarize* (IV. vii. 126). Be a sanc-
 tuary to.
 Why, even in that was heaven *ordinant* (V. ii. 48). Ordaining.
 And will no *reconcilement* (V. ii. 263). Reconciliation.

VERSIFICATION

The ordinary line of Blank Verse or Iambic Pentameter consists of five feet of two syllables, each with the accent on the second syllable.

[A foot with the accent on the first syllable is called a *Trochee*.]

“Was false’ly borne’| in hand’,| —sends out’| arrest’s| II. ii. 67.

On Fort’|inbras’;| which he’,| in brief’,| obeys’|| II. ii. 68.

A *Trochee* often occurs, especially as the first foot of a line.

“Looks’ it | not like’| the king’?| mark it’,| Horat’io|| I. i. 43.

“Cost’ly | thy hab’|it as’| thy purse’| can buy’||” I. iii. 70.

“Mar’ry, I’ll teach’| you: think’| yourself’| a baby’||” I. iii. 105.

Examples of a *Trochee* not as the first foot of a line.

“Affect’|ion! poo’h! | you speak’| like’ a | green girl’||” I. iii. 101.

“A broth’|er’s mur’|der’! | Pray’, can | I not’||” III. iii. 39.

An extra syllable is often added before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

“But not’| expressed’| in fan’|ey; rich’,| not gaudy’||” I. iii. 71.

“And that’| in way’| of caut’|ion—I’| must tell’ you’||” I. iii. 95.

“You’ do | not und’|ersta’nd | yourself’| so clearly’||” I. iii. 96.

Example of *extra syllables* in the middle of a line.

“Had he’| been van’quisher; | as, by’| the same’| covenant’||” I. i. 93.

Accented monosyllables and prepositions. Sometimes an unemphatic monosyllable is allowed to stand in an emphatic place, and to receive an accent.

“So please’| you, some’|thing touch’|ing the’| Lord Ham’let’||” I. iii. 89.

Two extra syllables are sometimes allowed, if unemphatic, before a pause, especially at the end of a line.

“My lord’,| I came’| to see’| your fa’|ther’s fu’neral’||” I. ii. 175.

“And meant’| to wreck’| thee; but’,| beshrew’| my jeal’ousy ||” II. i. 109.

Prefixes are dropped in the following words:

'Count for "account." 'Haviour for "behaviour."
'Gain-giving for "against giving." 'Noyance for "annoyance."
'Gainst for "against." 'Tend for "attend."

R frequently softens or destroys a following vowel. The vowel being nearly lost in the burr which follows the *r*.

"And then',| they say',| no spirit'| dares stir'| abroad'|" I. i. 161.

HAM. Perchance',| 'twill walk'| again.|

HOR. I warrant'| it will'|" I. ii. 242.

"Be thou'| a spirit'| of health',| or gob'| lin dam'n'd'|" I. iv. 40.

Whether and *ever*, and similar words pronounced as one syllable.

"Whether love'| lead for'| tune, or'| else for'| tune love'|" III. ii. 201.

"But never'| the offence'.| To bear'| all smooth'| and even'|" IV. iii. 7.

"To fust'| in us'| unused'.| Now whether'| it be'|" IV. iv. 38.

I in the middle of a trisyllable, if unaccented, is frequently dropped.

"Himself'| the prim'| rose path'| of dall'|(i)ance tre'ads'|" I. iii. 50.

"Unsift'| ed in'| such pe'r(i)l'ous cir'| cumstance'|" I. iii. 102.

An unaccented syllable of a polysyllable may sometimes be softened and almost ignored.

"A lit'| tle ere'| the migh't'| iest Jul'| ius fell'|" I. i. 114.

"The graves'| stood ten'| ant'| less, and'| the sheet'| ed dead'|" I. i. 115.

"As fits'| a king's'| remem'| brance.

Both'| your maj'eties'|" II. ii. 26.

"To give'| the assay'| of arms'| against'| your maj'esty'|" II. ii. 71.

In pronunciation *polysyllabic names* often receive but one accent at the end of the line.

"Thou art'| a schol'| ar; spea'k | to it',| *Hora'tio*|" I. i. 42.

"I pray'| thee, stay'| with us';| go not'| to *Wit'tenberg*|" I. ii. 119.

Or we may scan—

"I pray thee, (prithée) stay'| with us';| go not'| to Witt'| enber'g'|"

"Than may'| be giv'| en you'.| In few',| *Oph'elia*|" I. iii. 126.

"When thou'| liest howl'| ing. What'| the fair'| *Oph'elia*|" V. i. 265.

Examples in the middle of a line.

"How now',| *Hora'tio*!| you trem'| ble, and'| look pale'|" I. i. 53.

"Thrift, thrift',| *Hora'tio*!| the fun'| eral'| baked-meats'|" I. ii. 179.

Words in which a light vowel is preceded by a heavy vowel or diphthong are frequently contracted.

“We do’| it wrong’,| *being* so’| majes’|ic’al||” I. i. 143.

“Of en’|trance to’| a quarr’|el; but’,| *being* in’||” I. iii. 66.

“That you’,| at such’| times *seeing*’| me, nev’|er shall’||” I. v. 155.

“Will’ so | bestow’| ourselves’,| that, *seeing*’,| unseen’||” III. i. 33.

Ed following *d* or *t* is often not pronounced, even if written.

“I had’| not quot’ed him:| I fear’d’| he did’| but trifle’||” II. i. 108.

Er and *or* final pronounced with a kind of “burr,” giving the effect of an additional syllable.

“Lends’ the | tongue vows’:| these blaz’|es, daugh’|ter’||” I. iii. 117.

“To speak’| of hor’|rors,— | he comes’| before’ me||” II. i. 80.

“A broth’|er’s mur’|der!| Pray’, can | I not’||” III. iii. 39.

The terminative *ion*, at the end of a line, is frequently pronounced as two syllables. The *i* is also sometimes pronounced in such words as *soldier*, *marriage*, *conscience*, etc.; and the *e* in *surgeon*, *vengeance*, etc.

“As you’| are friends’,| scholars’,| and sol’|diers’||” I. v. 123.

“Do not’| forget’:| this vis’|ita’t’|ion’||” III. iv. 108.

“With sor’e | distract’|ion’.| What I’| have done’?||” V. ii. 246.

Fear, *dear*, *year*, *fire*, and other monosyllables ending in *r* or *re*, preceded by a long vowel or diphthong, are frequently pronounced as dissyllables.

“HOR. Where’,| my lord’?|

HAM. In’ my | mind’s’ eye,| Hora’tio||” I. ii. 184.

“You must’| not take’| for fi’|re. From’| this time’||” I. iii. 120.

“Fear’| me not’:— | withdraw’,| I hear’| him coming’||” III. iv. 7.

Monosyllables pronounced as dissyllables.

1. Exclamations

2. Those emphasized by position or antithesis

3. Those containing long vowels or diphthongs

4. Those containing a vowel followed by *r*.

“Where’fore | should you’| do this’?|

Ay’,| my lord’||” II. i. 34.

“Thence’ to | a watch’;| thence’| into’| a weak’ness||” II. ii. 149.

“The devil’| himself’|

O’, ’tis | too tr’ue!| how sm’art’||” III. i. 49.

“One wor’d more’,| good lady’|

What shall’| I do’?||” III. iv. 176.

“I’ll be’| with you straight’| Go’| a lit’|tle befo’re||” IV. iv. 30.

“To hide’| the slain’?| O’,| from this’| time for’t’h||” IV. iv. 64.

“Will you’| be ruled’| by me’?|

Ay’,| my lo’rd||” IV. vii. 58.

Accent:

1. Words in which the accent is nearer the end than with us.

Aspect’. “Tears’ in | his eyes’,| distract’|ion in’s’| aspect’||” II. ii. 592.

Canon’ized. “Why thy’| canon’|ized bones’,| hearsèd’| in death’||” I. iv. 47.

Chara’cter. “Look’ thou | charact’|er. Give’| thy thought’s | no tong’ue||” I. iii. 59.

Compact’ (noun). “Did slay’| this Fort’inbras;| who, by’| a seal’d | compact’||” I. i. 86.

Comrade’. “Of each’| new-hatch’d’,| unfledged’| comrade’|. Beware’||” I. iii. 65.

Contra’ry. “Our wills’| and fates’| do so’| contra’|ry run’||” III. ii. 209.

Converse’. Your par’ty in’| converse’,| him you’| would sound’||” II. i. 40.

Purpo’rt. “And with’| a look’| so pit’|eous in’| purport’||” II. i. 78.

Records’ (noun). “I’ll wipe’| away’| all triv’|ial fond’| records’||” I. v. 81.

Reve’nue. “That no’| reve’|nue hast’,| but thy’| good spirits’||” III. ii. 64.

2. Words in which the accent is nearer the beginning than with us.

Ab’surd. No, let’| the cand’|ied tongue’| lick ab’|surd pomp’||” III. ii. 66.

Co’mplete. “That thou’,| dead corse’,| again’,| in comp’|lete steel’||” I. iv. 52.

En’giner. “For ’tis | the sport’,| to have’| the en’giner’||” III. iv. 199.
So Abbott, but it is better to scan “engineer” with two accents.

“For ’tis | the sport’| to have’| the en’giner’||”

Import’uned. “My lord’,| he hath’| import’|uned me’| with love’||” I. iii. 110.

Ob’scure. “His means’| of death’,| his ob’|scure fun’|eral’||” IV. v. 196.

Perse’ver. “To do’| obse’|quious sorrow’:| but to’| perse’ver’||” I. ii. 92.

Pi'oner. "A worth'y pi'oner— | Once more' | remove', | good friends' ||" I. v. 145.

Se'cure. "Up on' | my se'cure hour' | thy un'cle stole' ||" I. v. 45.

A Proper Alexandrine (i. e. a line with six accents) is rarely found in Shakespeare.

An example of Alexandrine.

"And now' | by winds' | and waves' | my life' | less limbs' | are tossed' ||" —DRYDEN.

Apparent Alexandrines.

"Had he' | been van'quisher; | as, by' | the same' | covenant' ||" I. i. 93.

"Hyper' | ion to' | a sa'tyr: | so lov'ing to' | my mo'ther ||" I. ii. 140.

HOR. "Hail' to | your lord'ship |

HAM. I am (I'm) glad' | to see' | you well' ||" I. ii. 159.

"Unto that' | element': | but long' | it could' | not be' ||" IV. vii. 179.

"Unto that element" is contracted into "*Unt' that,*" "*el'ment.*"

"I'll be' | your foil', | La'ertes: in | mine ig' | norance' ||" V. ii. 271.

Many apparent Alexandrines are Trimeter Couplets, or two verses of three accents each.

"Whereof' | he is' | the head': || then', if | he says' | he loves' you ||" I. iii. 24.

"To what' | I shall' | unfold' ||

Speak'; I | am bound' | to hear' ||" I. v. 6.

"God will' | ing, shall' | not lack'. | Let us' | go in' | toge'ther ||" I. v. 169.

"Contag' | ion to' | this world': || now could' | I drink' | hot blood' ||" III. ii. 403.

"Ov'er | the nast'y sty',—

O, speak' | to me' | no more' ||" III. iv. 93.

"To whom' | do you' | speak this'? ||

Do you' | see no' | thing there' ||" III. iv. 129.

"Nor did' | you no' | thing hear'? |

No, no' | thing but' | ourselves'. ||" III. iv. 131.

"Of your' | dear fa'ther's death', || is't writ' | in your' | revenge' ||" IV. v. 124.

Amphibious section. When a verse consists of two parts uttered by two speakers, the latter part of the first verse is frequently the former part of the following verse, being, as it were, amphibious.

HAM. You'll' | reveal' it. |

HOR. Not I', | my lord', | by heaven' ! |

MAR. Nor I',| my Lord' || I. v. 101.

QUEEN. *Did he'| receive'| you well'?* ||

ROS. Most like'| a gent'leman' || '' III. i. 10-11.

Sometimes a section will, on the one side, form part of a regular line, and on the other, part of a *Trimeter Couplet*.

HOR. Of mine'| own eyes'. ||

MAR. *Is it'| not like'| the King'?* ||

HOR. As thou'| art to'| thyself' || '' I. i. 58-59.

OPH. In hon'|oura'|ble fas'hion ||

POL. Ay,| fash'ion | you' may | call' it; | go' to, | go' to || '' I. iii. 111-12.

MAR. No', it | is struck'.

HOR. *Indeed'?* | *I heard'* | *it not':* || it then'| draws near'| the sea'-son || I. iv. 4-5.

In the second line we may take *indeed* as a detached interjection as regards that line; i. e. the second portion of the section.

Lines of four accents.

“My father'!—| methinks'| I see'| my father' || '' I. ii. 183.

“As he'| would draw' it.| Long stay'd | he so' || '' II. i. 87.

“Must give'| us pause':| there's' the | respect' || '' III. i. 65.

There are many more examples of this kind.

Lines are often broken up between two speakers.

MAR. It' is | offend'|ed.

BER. See',| it stalks'| away' || I. i. 50.

GHOST. Mark' me.|

HAM. I will'.|

GHOST. My hour'| is al'|most come' || I. v. 2.

Interruptions are sometimes not allowed to interfere with the completeness of the verse.

POL. Pray' you,| be round'| with him'.

HAM. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother!

QUEEN. I'll war'|rant you' || III. iv. 5-6.

Scan the following lines thus:

“I'll'| speak to it',| though hell'| itself'| should gape' || '' I. ii. 244.

“Let' it | be ten'|able in'| your si'lence still' || '' I. ii. 247.

“The sa'|fety'| and health'| of this'| whole state' || '' I. iii. 21.

Scan *safety* as a trisyllable. The Folio reads *sanctity*, so *sanity* has been suggested as an emendation for *safety*.

“Bear ’t, that | the oppos’èd may’| beware’| of thee’||” I. iii. 67.

“Have’ of | your aud’|ience been’| most free’| and boun’teous||” I. iii. 93.

“Which’ are | not sterling’.| Ten’der | yourself’| more dearly’||” I. iii. 107.

“Why thy’| canon’|ized bones’|, hearsèd’| in death’||” I. iv. 47.

“I had’| not quoted him’:| I fear’d’| he did’| but trifle’||” II. i. 108.

“And thus’| o’er-siz’|ed with’| coag’|ulate gore’||” II. ii. 495.

“What’s Hec’uba’| to him’,| or he’| to Hec’uba’||” II. ii. 596.

“But never’| the offence’|. To bear’| all smooth’| and even’||” IV. iii. 7.

But never = But ne’er; *the offence* = Th’ offence.

“Next’, your | son gone’;| and he’| most vi’|(o)lent author’||” IV. v. 66.

The following couplet is scanned as eight and six.

“Why, let’| the strick’|en deer’| go weep’|,
The hart’,| ungall’|ed play’;| III. ii. 269-270 ff.

Scan Ophelia’s song thus:

“And will’| he not come’| again’?|
And will’| he not come’| again’?|
No, no’| he is dead’:
Go to’| thy death-bed’:
He never’| will come’| again’.||”

“His beard’| was as white’| as snow’|,
All flax’|en was’| his poll’:
He is gone’|, he is gone’|,
And we cast’| away’| moan’;|
God ha’ mer’|cy on’| his soul’!||” IV. v. 173-182.

Rhyme. “Rhyme was often used as an effective termination at the end of a scene. When scenery was not changed, or the arrangements were so defective that the change was not easily perceptible, it was perhaps additionally desirable to mark a scene that was finished.”

“Rhyme was also sometimes used in the same conventional way to mark an aside, which otherwise the audience might have great difficulty in knowing to be an aside.”—*Abbott*.

Examples of rhyme at the end of a scene are: I. ii., II. i., II. ii., III. i., III. ii., III. iii., IV. i., IV. iii., IV. iv., V. i., V. ii.

Prose. Prose is not only used in comic scenes; it is adopted for letters, M. of V. IV. i. 147-63, and on other occasions when it is desirable to lower the dramatic pitch: for instance, in the more colloquial parts of the household scene between Volumnia and Virgilia, *Coriol*, I. iii., where the scene begins with prose, then passes into verse, and returns finally to prose. It is also used to express frenzy, *Othello*, IV. i. 34-44; and madness, *King Lear*, IV. vi. 130, and the higher flights of the imagination.

Examples of *prose* in *Hamlet*:

II. ii. 169-449. Madness and colloquial.

II. ii. 499, 500. Colloquial.

II. ii. 531-534. Colloquial.

II. ii. 552-585. Colloquial.

III. ii. 100-154. Hamlet simulates madness when in conversation with the king, the queen, and Ophelia.

III. ii. 1-51. Colloquial. Hamlet's conversation with the players.

III. ii. 98-154, 182, 222, 227-268. Interruptions in the play scene; the prose marks the conversation of the audience.

III. ii. 273-293. Colloquial. Hamlet conversing with Horatio.

III. ii. 294-400. On the entrance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Hamlet simulates madness.

III. ii. 401-412. Now that Hamlet is alone he speaks in verse.

IV. iii. 43-57. Hamlet is simulating madness.

IV. v. 21-60. Ophelia, really mad, speaks in prose.

IV. v. 153-184. Ophelia dressed with straws and flowers speaks in prose. Her madness becomes apparent to Laertes.

IV. vi. 6-34. Colloquial between Horatio and the sailors. The letter is also in prose.

IV. vii. 43-47. A letter.

V. i. 1-240. Partly comedy, partly colloquial between the gravediggers and Hamlet.

V. ii. 81-191. The conversation with Osric. Colloquial.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

I

1. Write a brief biography of Shakespeare—not more than ten or fifteen lines.
2. Who was Ann Hathaway?
3. During the reigns of what British monarchs did Shakespeare flourish?
4. What was Shakespeare's last place of residence?
5. Quote the lines inscribed on Shakespeare's tomb.
6. Briefly discuss Shakespeare's religion.
7. Who was Archdeacon Davies?
8. Briefly discuss Shakespeare's learning.
9. Write a short sketch of the drama.
10. Briefly describe the presentation of the drama in Shakespeare's time.

II

1. What was the Stationers' Company?
2. Where and under what name did Shakespeare's *Hamlet* first appear, and what is the generally accepted opinion regarding the genuineness of this edition?
3. How does the title of the 1603 edition differ from that of the 1604 edition?
4. How many Quarto and how many Folio editions of Shakespeare's works were published?
5. How does the present edition of *Hamlet* differ from its original form in the Folio and in the Quarto?
6. Briefly give the sources of the play *Hamlet*.
7. Show the points of resemblance between *Hamlet* and the *Legend of Amleth*.
8. Synopsise Arnold's remarks on *Hamlet*.

III

1. Briefly sketch the character of Claudius.
2. How does he appear as a King?
3. Write eight or ten lines descriptive of the Queen.

4. How does the Queen act towards Ophelia?
5. Who was Mrs. Jameson?
6. The Queen says of Hamlet "he is fat, and scant of breath": Discuss this statement.
7. Who was Goethe?
8. What does Dowden say regarding the sincerity of Hamlet?
9. Quote Gervinus on Hamlet's literary tastes.
10. Discuss Hamlet's *melancholy* and *irresolution*.

IV

1. Briefly sketch the character of Polonius.
2. State Hazlitt's opinion of him.
3. Who was Hazlitt?
4. Give the substance of Ophelia's reply to Laertes' fraternal advice.
5. Where was Laertes educated?
6. Synopsise Dowden's estimate of Laertes.
7. Draw a brief contrast between the characters of Laertes and of Hamlet.
8. Who was Ulrici?

V

1. Amplify the phrase "Unsifted in such perilous circumstance."
2. Why does Hamlet advise Ophelia to go to a nunnery?
3. What is the only fault in Ophelia's character?
4. How does Maeterlinck speak of Goethe's Margaret and of Shakespeare's Ophelia?
5. Tell what you know of Maeterlinck.

VI

1. Write a brief sketch of Horatio.
2. Give the substance of what Richardson says of Horatio.
3. Who was Richardson?
4. Who was Fortinbras?
5. Of what was Osric a type?
6. Who were Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?
7. How does Hamlet justify his conduct towards Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?
8. Tell what you know of the Gravediggers.
9. Give the substance of Richardson's reference to the Ghost.
10. Who was Charles Lamb?

VII

(ACTS I AND II)

Write notes on:—

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| (a) University of Wittenberg. | (f) Nemean lion. |
| (b) Hyperion. | (g) Lethe. |
| (c) Niobe. | (h) Hebenon. |
| (d) Hercules. | (i) Arras. |
| (e) Sterling. | (j) Seneca. |

VIII

(ACT III)

Write notes on:—

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| (a) Termagant. | (f) Phoebus. |
| (b) Herod. | (g) Hecate. |
| (c) Vulcan. | (h) Damon. |
| (d) The Capitol. | (i) Soul of Nero. |
| (e) Brutus. | (j) Mercury. |

IX

(ACT IV)

Write notes on:—

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) Sponge. | (d) Hatchment. |
| (b) A baker's daughter. | (e) Stood challenger. |
| (c) Saint Valentine. | |

X

(ACT V)

Write notes on:—

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Yaughan. | (e) Yeoman's service. |
| (b) Alexander. | (f) Lapwing. |
| (c) Pelion. | (g) They change rapiers. |
| (d) Ossa. | |

ACT I. SCENE I

1. What part do Marcellus and Francisco take in the play?
2. Describe (by quotations) the appearance, dress, and features of the Ghost.
3. Write out passage on ll. 113 to 125, inclusive.
4. Explain the following words: *fantasy, approve, sometimes, jump, mart, divide, stomach, romage, stands, still, foreknowing, extravagant, takes, russet.*
5. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 149 to 156, inclusive.

6. Write explanatory notes, grammatical or otherwise, on "carefully upon your hour," "bitter cold," "rivals," "a piece of him," "avouch," "sledded Polack," "impress," "romage," "harbingers," "partisan," "being so majestic," "bird of dawning," "needful in our loves."
7. Mention any superstitious beliefs referred to in this scene.

ACT I. SCENE II

1. How does Claudius endeavor to justify his marriage with the Queen?
2. What contrasts does Hamlet draw between his father and his uncle?
3. Quote Hamlet's enumeration of the ordinary signs of woe.
4. Name the speaker, explain the meaning and allusion in: "colleagued with the dream of his advantage," "the most immediate to our throne," "cast thy nighted colour off," "lose your voice," "my hard consent," "what make you from Wittenberg," "I doubt some foul play?"
5. Write out the passage on ll. 129 to 146, inclusive.
6. What meaning does Shakespeare attach to the following words: *some-time*, *jointress*, *supposal*, *pardon*, *laboursome*, *cousin*, *'haviour*, *denote*, *retrograde*, *rouse*, *merely*, *change*, *exactly*, *constantly*, *dexterity*, *post*? Give the context.
7. Quote instances of double negatives.
8. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 198 to 205, inclusive.
9. Explain the grammar of: "we have here writ to Norway," "more than the scope of these dilated articles allow," "we doubt it nothing," "as any the most vulgar," "than that which dearest father bears his son."
10. Give meaning of: *impotent*, *dilated*, *lids*, *beaver*, *vulgar*, *jocund*, *obsequious*, *tell*, *vailed*.
11. Write notes upon: "Wittenberg university," "the great cannon," "like Niobe, all tears," "had left the flushing in her galled eyes," "windy suspiration of forced breath."
12. What causes Fortinbras to choose the opportunity for attacking Denmark?

ACT I. SCENE III

1. What view does Laertes take of Hamlet's favor to Ophelia? What advice does he give her? How do subsequent events justify or condemn the warning?
2. Quote the precepts of Polonius to Laertes, tabulating them under the following heads: (1) general conduct, (2) friendship, (3) quarrels, (4) dress, (5) loans.

3. Give the meaning of the following words: *convoy, suppliance, soil, cautel, main voice, unmaster'd, ungracious, puffed, occasion, character, censure, chief, husbandry, season, tend, unsifted, tenders, entreatments, tether, charge.*
4. Scan lines 21, 33, 64, 101, 117, 120.
5. Write notes upon: "a violet in the youth of primy nature," "he may not . . . carve for himself," "dull thy palm," "shall keep the key," "to crack the wind," "springes to catch woodcocks," "and with a larger tether may he walk."
6. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 126 to 131, inclusive.
7. Quote the lines illustrating a play on the words (and explain) *tender, fashion.*
8. Comment upon the grammar of:—
 - (a) "Best safety lies in fear."
 - (b) "Nor any unproportion'd thought his act."
 - (c) "The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried."
 - (d) "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy."
 - (e) "How prodigal the soul lends the tongue vows."
 - (f) "As it is a-making."
 - (g) "I would not have you so slander any moment leisure."

ACT I. SCENE IV

1. Show that when Hamlet is excited he is capable of independent action.
2. Explain the line, "Doth all the noble substance often dout."
3. Write out passage on ll. 15 to 38, inclusive.
4. Paraphrase the passage ll. 70 to 79, inclusive.
5. Explain allusions: "Fortune's star," "Nemean lion's nerve."
6. "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." Justify this statement. Who was the speaker?
7. Give meaning and context of: *eager, wont, wassail, up-spring reels, clepe, pales, plausible, undergo, livery, dram of base, dout, cerements, inurn'd, disposition, impartment, removed, beetles, toys, nerve.*
8. Explain: "the king doth wake," "soil our addition," "mole of nature," "too much o'er-leavens."
9. How does Hamlet address the Ghost and how does the Ghost reply?
10. Illustrate Shakespeare's acquaintance with legal terminology.

ACT I. SCENE V

1. What was the general idea regarding the cause of the king's death?
2. Quote the Ghost's account of the King's murder.

3. Give the meanings of: *render, harrow, haste, rankly, secure, posset, globe, fond, saws, pressures, arrant, circumstance, truepenny, pioner, antic, luxury.*
4. Explain: "eternal blazon," "a most instant tetter barked about," "unhouselled, disappointed, unaneled," "upon my sword," "in the cellarage," "hie et ubique," "the time is out of joint."
5. Comment upon the grammar of:—
 - (a) "'Gins to pale his uneffectual fire."
 - (b) "But this is wondrous strange."
 - (c) "At your most need."
6. Scan: "As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers."
7. What was Hamlet's object in feigning madness?
8. Quote in Shakespeare's words an allusion to the doctrine of purgatory.

ACT II. SCENE I

1. Who is Reynaldo? What part does he take in the play?
2. Mention some anachronisms in the play.
3. What conclusions have you reached regarding the character of Polonius?
4. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 6 to 15, inclusive.
5. Comment on the following words and phrases: "marvellous wisely," "Danskers," "drift of question," "slips," "season," "quaintly," "taints of liberty," "drift," "prenominate," "addition," "windlasses," "assays of bias," "down-gyved," "fordoes," "proper."
6. "Wherefore should you do this?" Who puts this question, and what answer is given?
7. "This is the very ecstasy of love." What actions on the part of Hamlet cause Polonius to make this comment?
8. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 59 to 62, inclusive.

ACT II. SCENE II

1. In the plot against Hamlet, what part is taken by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and with what success?
2. Describe in the words of Polonius the gradual decline of Hamlet "into the madness wherein now he raves."
3. How does Polonius propose to test his theory?
4. Who is Voltimand? Give a short summary of his message.
5. Explain the use and give context of: *provoke, sending, gentry, fruit, distemper, pass, expostulate, perpend, machine, round, watch, arras, indifferent.*

6. Explain: "vouchsafe your rest," "upon our first," "assay of arms," "in her excellent white bosom," "I am ill at these numbers," "if I had played the desk," "idle sight," "mark the encounter," "I'll board him presently."
7. Explain the grammar of: "of so young days," "the power you have of us," "upon our first, he sent out to suppress," "he truly found it was against your highness," "and now remains," "excellent well," "as hush as death," "you were better have a bad epitaph."
8. Explain the allusions in:—
 - (a) "The satirical rogue says."
 - (b) "Of Fortune's cap we are the very button."
 - (c) "Your secrecy . . . moult no feather."
 - (d) "What is this quintessence of dust?"
 - (e) "Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light."
 - (f) "'Twas Æneas' tale to Dido."
9. How does Hamlet discuss the charge of ambition?

ACT II. SCENE II (*Continued*)

1. Give an account (1) of the conversation between Hamlet and Polonius in the lobby, (2) of the meeting between Hamlet and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
2. Explain the use of: *direct, brave, fretted, rusty, airy, quality, argument, comply, buz, row, abridgment*.
3. Explain: "outstretched heroes," "a free visitation," "a better proposer," "tickled o' the sere," "top of question," "picture in little," "scene individable," "poem unlimited," "thy face is valanced," "your ladyship is nearer heaven," "the altitude of a chopine," "cracked within the ring."
4. Paraphrase the passage on II. 361 to 368.
5. Explain and give the context of:—
 - (a) "Then are our beggars bodies."
 - (b) "What make you at Elsinore?"
 - (c) "I know a hawk from a handsaw."
 - (d) "'Twas caviare to the general."
 - (e) "What's Hecuba to him?"
6. "What a piece of work is a man!" How does Hamlet describe him?
7. Give meaning of: *confines, fay, prevent, paragon, coted, escoted, cue, cunning, tent, blench, sift*.
8. How does Hamlet receive the players?

ACT II. SCENE II (*Continued*)

1. Write out passage on ll. 587 to 603, inclusive.
2. Briefly describe the death of Priam. What was the play described by Hamlet as one that "pleased not the million"?
3. Explain the use and give context of: *rack, region, mobled, passion, function, amaze, kindless, abuses, relative.*
4. Explain: "total gules," "o'er-sized with coagulate gore," "takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear," "a painted tyrant," "proof eterne," "bisson rheum," "speak out the rest," "for a need," "pigeon-livered."
5. Who were Pyrrhus, Priam, Hecuba?
6. Comment on the grammar of "Who does me this?" and give other examples from the play of a like construction.
7. Explain the allusions in:—
 - (a) "When he lay couched in the ominous horse."
 - (b) "The Cyclops' hammers."
 - (c) "I was killed i' the Capitol."
8. What plan does Hamlet form to test the conscience of King Claudius?

ACT III. SCENE I

1. Write out passage on ll. 53 to 85, inclusive. What is the theme upon which Hamlet meditates in this soliloquy?
2. What report do Rosencrantz and Guildenstern make to the King on the subject of Hamlet's eccentric behavior? What questions are put to them (1) by the King, (2) by the Queen?
3. What fresh contrivance is arranged for discovering the cause of Hamlet's distraction?
4. Give the meaning, with context, of: *o'er-raught, closely, affront, rub, spurns, takes, bodkin, pith, remembrances, re-deliver, honest, wantonness, disclose.*
5. Explain: "drift of circumstance," "to both your honours," "give him a further edge," "when we have shuffled off this mortal coil," "the native hue of resolution," "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," "variable objects."
6. Comment on the grammar of: "and he beseeched me," "I shall obey you," "who would bear . . . the oppressor's wrong," "soft you now," "their perfume lost, take these again," "the time gives it proof," "which, for to prevent," "he shall with speed to England," "whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus."

7. Give meaning of: *quietus, fardels, orisons, aught, nickname.*
8. Describe the scene between Hamlet and Ophelia following the soliloquy referred to in question 1.
9. Account for Hamlet's strange behavior to Ophelia.

ACT III. SCENE II

1. Give Hamlet's description of Horatio.
2. Where is the scene of the play?
3. Give the substance of Hamlet's instructions to the players.
4. Describe the dumb show enacted by the players.
5. Give the meaning, with context, of: *groundlings, modesty, pressure, censure, barren, coped, advancement, thrift, idle, stay, leave, instances, opposite, blanks.*
6. Explain: "candied tongue," "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee," "the chameleon's dish," "what did you enact?" "hobby-horse," "miching mallecho," "posy of a ring," "an anchor's cheer," "let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung."
7. Comment on the grammar of: "nor do not saw the air too much," "a thousand pound," "discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must," "the littlest doubts are fear," "which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree; but fall, unshaken, when they mellow be," "nor 'tis not strange," "in one line two crafts directly meet."
8. Explain allusions in: "whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod," "Phœbus' cart," "Neptune's salt wash," "with Hecate's ban thrice blasted," "for thou dost know, O Damon, dear," "the soul of Nero."
9. Explain: *periwig, journeymen, unkennel, stithy, puppets, toil, shent.*
10. Write out passage on ll. 202 to 207, inclusive.

ACT III. SCENE II (Continued)

1. Does "the mouse-trap" succeed in "catching the conscience of the king?"
2. What reasons can be given for considering the madness of Hamlet real?
3. Give the meaning of: *tropically, image, anon, cry, wholesome, fret.*
4. Explain: "free souls," "leave thy damnable faces," "turn Turk," "razed shoes," "perdy," "marvellous distempered," "pickers and stealers," "give them seals," "the voice of the king."
5. Write out the passage on ll. 401 to 412, inclusive.

6. What are the steps by which Hamlet becomes satisfied that Claudius is the King's murderer?
7. What do we learn from the play about the stage in Shakespeare's time?
8. Quote a few expressions from the play that have become proverbial.
9. What allusions are there in the play to contemporary history and customs?

ACT III. SCENE III

1. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 11 to 22, inclusive.
2. Quote the passage on ll. 37 to 47, inclusive.
3. To what thoughts does the King give utterance on (1) mercy, (2) prayer, (3) repentance?
4. What reasons does Hamlet give for not putting the King to death when at prayer? Comment upon the same.
5. Explain meaning of: *gulf*, *free-footed*, *closet*, *effects*, *rests*, *scann'd*, *flush*, *hent*.
6. Explain: "terms of our estate," "single and peculiar life," "cease of majesty," "speedy voyage."
7. Comment upon the grammar of: "and he to England shall along with you," "we will ourselves provide," "ten thousand lesser things," "should o'erhear the speech of vantage," "the wicked prize itself buys out the law," "the action lies in his true nature."
8. Explain the allusions in: "primal eldest curse," "and what's in prayer but this two-fold force," "offence's gilded hand may shove by justice," "when he is fit and season'd for his passage."

ACT III. SCENE IV

1. In the scene between Hamlet and the Queen, describe (1) the death of Polonius, (2) the reappearing of the Ghost.
2. What effect have Hamlet's upbraidings on the Queen?
3. Reproduce in the words of Shakespeare the pictures of the present and the late King as depicted by Hamlet.
4. What epithets does Hamlet apply to Polonius? Is he justified in so doing?
5. In what words does Hamlet maintain his own sanity?
6. Give the meaning of the following, with context: *broad*, *round*, *idle*, *rood*, *rat*, *station*, *batten*, *motion*, *hoodman-blind*, *mope*, *mutine*, *cut-purse*, *visitation*, *conceit*, *coinage*, *pursy*, *minister*, *ravel*, *paddock*, *gib*, *sport*, *delve*.

7. Explain: "new-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill," "a Vice of kings," "to try conclusions."
8. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 48 to 51, inclusive, and 71 to 81.
9. Explain the grammar of: "fear me not," "nor sense to ecstacy was ne'er so thrall'd," "O throw away the worser part of it," "let the bloat king tempt you," "I had forgot: 'tis so concluded," "there's letters sealed," "and blow them at the moon."

ACT IV. SCENES I, II, III

1. What comment does the King make upon the death of Polonius, and what course of action does he decide upon?
2. Why was the King unable to get rid of Hamlet by direct means?
3. What reference is made to England in the play? What conclusion can you draw from it as to the date of the events related in the play?
4. Give the meaning of: *liberty, threats, woundless, authorities, convocation, fat.*
5. Explain: "the owner of a foul disease," "his brainish apprehension," "the pith of life," "variable service," "with fiery quickness," "the wind at help," "the associates tend."
6. Explain the meaning of: "Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!" By whom were the words spoken, and to whom do they refer? Justify the contemptuous epithet "sponge."

ACT IV. SCENES IV, V

1. Illustrate the character of Fortinbras by quotations from the play. Contrast him with Hamlet. How does Hamlet contrast Fortinbras with himself?
2. Write out the passage on ll. 32 to 38, inclusive.
3. Paraphrase the passage on ll. 55 to 64, inclusive.
4. Explain: "the conveyance of a promised march," "truly to speak, and with no addition," "army, of such mass and charge," "makes mouths at the invisible event," "trick of fame," "each toy seems prologue to some great amiss," "the beauteous majesty of Denmark," "God 'ield you."
5. Explain the use of: *debate, imposthume, fast, puffed, blood, spurns, collection, aim, botch, larded, conceit, betime.*
6. Comment upon the grammar of: "her mood will needs be pitied," "there's tricks i' the world," "and his sandal shoon," "I cannot choose but weep."

7. With regard to Ophelia's madness, (1) Give indications of her insanity; (2) Note the principal points of difference between her state and Hamlet's assumed madness; (3) Upon what subjects do her thoughts run? (4) What was the cause of her madness?
8. Quote Ophelia's song commencing "To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day."
9. Explain allusions: "cockle hat and . . . shoon," "the owl is a baker's daughter," "St. Valentine's day."

ACT IV. SCENE V

1. "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions." What are these "sorrows" as enumerated by the King?
2. Was Hamlet's madness assumed? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Give meaning of: *hugger-mugger*, *buzzers*, *counter*, *level*, *fine*, *instance*, *barefaced*, *persuade*, *document*, *hatchment*, *escutcheon*.
4. Explain: "as much containing," "keeps himself in clouds," "our person to arraign in ear and ear," "sense and virtue of mine eye," "and we cast away moan," "I must commune with your grief."
5. What is the signification of *rosemary*, *pansies*, *fennel*, *columbine*, *rue*, *violets*, and to whom does Ophelia present them?
6. Explain allusions: "come, my coach," "like to a murdering piece," "where are my Switzers?" "how cheerfully on the false trail they cry," "the kind life-rendering pelican," "you may wear your rue with a difference."
7. Explain grammar of: "follow her close," "for good Polonius' death," "will nothing stick our person to arraign," "gives me superfluous death," "the doors are broke," "do not fear our person," "treason can but peep to what it would," "acts little of his will," "is't writ in your revenge," "or you deny me right," "make choice of whom your wisest friends you will," "his means of death."

ACT IV. SCENES VI, VII

1. Give the substance of Hamlet's letter to Horatio.
2. "Of them I have much to tell thee." To whom does Hamlet refer? When does he give the explanation to Horatio, and what does he tell him?

3. Who was Lamond? What mention is made of him?
4. Give the meaning of: *crimeful, count, gyves, naked, abuse, character, weeds, scrimers, motion, unbated, contagion, nonce, venom'd, liberal, trick.*
5. Explain: "the bore of the matter," "it well appears," "the queen lives almost by his looks," "the general gender," "my sudden and more strange return," "wind of blame," "such a masterly report," "the quick o' the ulcer," "pass of practice," "blast in proof," "long purples."
6. Comment on the grammar of: "what are they?" "I'll give you way for these letters, and do't the speedier," "let our beard be shook with danger," "he shall not choose but fall," "no place should murder sanctuarize," "which time she chanted snatches of old tunes."
7. Write out the passage describing the death of Ophelia, ll. 165 to 182.
8. Give a description of her death in your own words.
9. Explain allusions: "the spring that turneth wood to stone," "stood challenger on mount of all the age," "as checking at his voyage," "he is the brooch and gem of all the nation."

ACT V. SCENE I

1. At what point in the play does Hamlet cease to feign madness?
2. What allusions does Hamlet make to Alexander and Imperial Cæsar?
3. Explain: "their even Christian," "tell me that, and unyoke," "speak by the card," "he galls his kibe," "peace-parted souls," "thy most ingenious sense," "wonder-wounded hearers," "we'll put the matter to the present push."
4. Give the meaning of: *argal, delver, stoop, intill, jowls, politician, mazard, sconce, quick, absolute, picked, jester, chap-fallen, fordo, shards, crants, requiem, disclosed.*
5. What remarks does Hamlet make (1) on the skull of a lawyer, (2) on the social position of a peasant?
6. Explain allusions: "Adam's profession," "get thee to Yaughan," "Cain's jawbone," "to play at loggats," "she should in ground unsanctified have lodged," "to o'ertop old Pelion," "make Ossa like a wart," "her golden couplets," "not a jot," "the bringing home of bell and burial."

7. What instances are there of "play on words" in Act V. Sc. i.? Mention other instances in the play.
8. According to the clown, what are the three branches of an act?
9. Explain the grammar of: "one that would circumvent God," "for and a shrouding sheet."
10. What allusions are made in Act V. Sc. i. to Hamlet's age and to England?
11. Give instances of the Clowns' or Gravediggers' using words conveying opposite meaning to that intended.

ACT V. SCENE II

1. Describe the entrance of the funeral procession in Act V. Sc. i.
2. Give a summary of the action and behavior of the priest.
3. "There is in Hamlet a terrible power of sudden and desperate action" (Dowden). Illustrate this remark from the play.
4. How does Hamlet justify himself for the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?
5. Who is Osric? What part does he take in the play? What affectations of his time does Shakespeare satirize in this character?
6. Give the meaning of: *bugs, baseness, defeat, insinuation, angle, cozenage, bravery, chough, complexion, semblable, umbrage, concernancy, unfellowed, imponed, assigns, hangers, responsive, germane, redeliver.*
7. Explain: "my sea-gown scarfed about me," "on the supervise, no leisure bated," "gave't the impression," "full of most excellent differences," "his defilement suffers no perdition."
8. Explain allusions: "not to stay the grinding of the axe," "not shriving-time allowed," "the changeling never known," "this lapwing runs away with the shell on his head."
9. Comment upon the grammar of: "does it not stand me, think'st thee, now upon?" "I should impart a thing to you," "it is indifferent cold," "in our more rawer breath," "it would not much approve me."
10. What were the terms of the wager? What were the stakes?

ACT V. SCENE II (Continued)

1. What conversation took place between Hamlet and Laertes previous to the duel?
2. What were the stratagems of the King and Laertes for the destruction of Hamlet? How did they fail?

3. Describe the conduct of the Queen during the duel.
4. Quote the dying words of Laertes.
5. What was Hamlet's dying charge to Horatio, and what rôle did he appoint to Fortinbras?
6. Give the meaning and context of: *gain-giving, union, kettle, napkin, unbated, tempered, chance, occurrents, toward, jump, upshot, presently.*
7. Explain: "use some gentle entertainment," "this presence knows," "I am satisfied in nature," "to keep my name ungorred," "stick fiery off," "whose voice will draw on more."
8. Explain allusions: "a special providence in the fall of a sparrow," "Sir, in this audience," "this fell sergeant Death," "I am more an antique Roman than a Dane," "this quarry cries on havoc," "go, bid the soldiers shoot."
9. Explain with reference to the context: "there's a divinity which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will," "it did me yeoman's service," "the interim is mine," "dost know this water-fly," "put your bonnet to his right use," "you will lose this wager, my lord."

GENERAL

1. Discuss the character of Polonius, illustrating, if you can, by quotations.
2. Explain the following passages, referring in each case to the context:—
 - (a)

It is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
 - (b) I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.
 - (c) To be, or not to be,—that is the question.
 - (d) Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.
3. What part is played in the drama by Laertes?
4. Hamlet is alternately irresolute and passionate. Give any instances of both moods that you can remember.
5. What is meant by: *cautel, dout, eyases, caviare, mobled, John-a-dreams, shent, imposthume, loggats, bugs, an union.*
6. Write not more than twelve or fourteen lines of *one only* of the following passages beginning,
 - (a) Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would melt.
 - (b) I am thy father's spirit.
 - (c) Oh, my offense is rank.

GENERAL (*Continued*)

1. Explain carefully the meaning of the following passages, and give the name of the speaker and the occasion of the speech:—
 - (a) But there is, Sir, an aiery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for 't.
 - (b) Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing.
 - (c) Witness this army, of such mass and charge,
Let by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
Makes mouths at the invisible event.
 - (d) There's such divinity doth hedge a king.
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.
 - (e) Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures,
and his tricks?
2. Describe and explain Hamlet's treatment of:—
 - (a) His mother.
 - (b) Ophelia.
3. Contrast the character of Hamlet with that of Horatio.
4. How do you account for Hamlet's procrastination in taking vengeance on his father's murderer?

GLOSSARY

- About**, turn your activity in another direction, II. ii. 628.
- Abridgement**, cutting off my speech, II. ii. 449.
- Absolute**, positive, V. i. 151.
- Abstract**, summary, II. ii. 558.
- Abuse**, deceit, IV. vii. 49.
- Adder**, a viper, III. iv. 196.
- Addition**, a title, I. iv. 20; II. i. 45.
- Admiration**, perplexity, wonder, I. ii. 191; III. ii. 334.
- Aiery**, an eagle's nest; hence a brood, II. ii. 362.
- Affections**, mental state, disposition, III. i. 167.
- Affront**, confront, III. i. 31.
- After**, according to, II. ii. 565.
- Against**, before, II. ii. 516.
- Aim**, guess, IV. v. 9.
- Alarm**, call to arms, III. iv. 118.
- Alley**, a passage, a gallery, I. v. 51.
- Allowance**, permission, II. ii. 79.
- Amaze**, confound, II. ii. 602.
- Amble**, walk in an affected manner, III. i. 148.
- Amiss**, disaster, IV. v. 18.
- Anchor**, a recluse, a hermit, anchorite, III. ii. 217.
- And**, if, V. i. 308.
- Anon**, immediately, soon, II. ii. 501.
- Answer**, to account for, III. iv. 172; acceptance, V. ii. 179.
- Antic**, fantastic, strange, I. v. 154.
- Antique**, old, ancient, V. ii. 359.
- Apoplex'd**, benumbed, paralyzed, III. iv. 73.
- Apparel**, dress, clothes, I. iii. 72.
- Approve**, to prove, justify, I. i. 29; to commend, V. ii. 143.
- Apurtenance**, proper accompaniment, II. ii. 396.
- Apt**, ready, I. v. 31.
- Argal**, therefore, V. i. 13.
- Argument**, the plot of a play, II. ii. 380; III. ii. 144; object of quarrel, IV. iv. 53.
- Arrant**, real, I. v. 106.
- Arras**, tapestry, III. iii. 29.
- Art**, ingenuity, II. ii. 95; artfulness, II. ii. 96.
- Artery**, sinew, I. iv. 83.
- Article**, substance, V. ii. 123.
- Artless**, ignorant, IV. v. 19.
- As**, since, IV. vii. 8.
- Assail**, to assault, to attack, I. i. 31.
- Assay**, tempt, III. i. 14.
- Assigns**, appendages, V. ii. 159.
- Audit**, final account, III. iii. 83.
- Aught**, a thing, anything, II. ii. 17.
- Angury**, omens, V. ii. 234.
- Auspicious**, bright, happy looking, I. ii. 11.
- Avouch**, warrant, confirmation, I. i. 57.
- Ban**, proclamation, excommunication, curse, III. ii. 255.
- Bare**, unsheathed, III. i. 73.
- Barred**, shut out, I. ii. 14.
- Baseness**, beneath a gentleman, V. ii. 34.
- Bated**, without delay, V. ii. 23.
- Batten**, to grow fat, to fatten, III. iv. 67.
- Beaten**, familiar, II. ii. 280.
- Bear**, carry out, IV. iii. 7.
- Bear't**, conduct yourself, I. iii. 67.
- Beaver**, the lower part of a helmet, I. ii. 229.
- Beetle**, to project over, I. iv. 72.
- Behove**, advantage, V. i. 71.
- Bent**, inclination, II. ii. 30.
- Berattle**, attack noisily, berate, II. ii. 365.
- Bestow**, to pack away, III. iv. 172.
- Bestowed**, lodged, II. ii. 557.
- Bespeak**, address, II. ii. 141.
- Better'd**, improved, V. ii. 280.
- Bias**, indirect attempts, II. i. 61.
- Bilboes**, fetters named from Bilboa in Spain, V. ii. 6.
- Bisson**, blinding, II. ii. 538.
- Blank**, white spot in the center of a target, IV. i. 42.
- Blanks**, blanches, III. ii. 218.
- Blastments**, blights, I. iii. 42.
- Blazon**, revelation, I. v. 21.
- Blench**, flinch, II. ii. 637.
- Blood**, impulse, III. ii. 75.
- Blown**, in full bloom, III. i. 164.
- Board**, to accost, II. ii. 172.
- Bodkin**, a small dagger, III. i. 73.

- Bodykins**, diminutive of body, II. ii. 564.
Bore, caliber, IV. vi. 27.
Botch, to repair, IV. v. 10.
Bound, ready, I. v. 6.
Bourn, limit, boundary, III. i. 76.
Brave, grand, fine, II. ii. 317; glorious, II. ii. 622.
Bravery, swagger, V. ii. 79.
Braz'd, hardened, III. iv. 37.
Breathe, whisper, II. i. 29.
Broad, beyond bounds, free, III. iv. 2.
Broker, an agent, a go-between, I. iii. 127.
Brooch, ornament, IV. vii. 92.
Bruit, report loudly, I. ii. 127.
Budge, to stir, III. iv. 18.
Bugs, terrors, V. ii. 22.
Bulk, the trunk of the body, II. i. 91.
Bulwark, barrier, III. iv. 38.
Busy, meddlesome, III. iv. 33.
Button, a bud, I. iii. 40.
Buzzers, whisperers, tale-bearers, IV. v. 76.
By, about, II. ii. 190.
Canker, a worm, I. iii. 39; an ulcer, V. ii. 69.
Canon, a rule, a law, I. ii. 132.
Canonized, ordained a saint, I. iv. 47.
Capable, sensitive, III. iv. 125.
Cap-a-pé, from head to foot, I. ii. 199.
Capital, involving loss of life, IV. vii. 7.
Carbuncle, a small coal, a gem, II. ii. 496.
Card, chart or compass, i. e. guide, V. ii. 115.
Carouse, a deep draught, V. ii. 307.
Carp, a fish, II. i. 59.
Carriage, import, I. i. 94.
Carrión, a carcass, putrid flesh, II. ii. 184.
Cart, chariot, III. ii. 156.
Cataplasm, a plaster, a poultice, IV. vii. 142.
Cautel, deceit, I. iii. 15.
Censure, blame, I. iii. 69; I. iv. 35; III. ii. 31; III. ii. 93.
Cerements, grave clothes, I. iv. 48.
Chameleon, a lizard which feeds on the air, III. ii. 99.
Change, exchange, I. ii. 162.
Chapless, without a jaw, V. i. 97.
Character, write, I. iii. 59.
Charge, impulse, III. iv. 86; cost, IV. iv. 46; importance, V. ii. 43.
Chariest, most cautious, I. iii. 36.
Cheer, cheerfulness, III. ii. 165.
Choler, bile, anger, III. ii. 307.
Chopine, shoe with a wooden sole, II. ii. 456.
Chough, any chattering bird, V. ii. 90.
Cicatrice, a scar left by a wound, IV. iii. 64.
Clepe, to call, I. iv. 19.
Climatures, regions, climates, I. i. 125.
Closely, with a secret purpose, III. i. 29.
Closet, private chamber, II. i. 73.
Clout, cloth, patch, II. ii. 539.
Clown, a rustic, V. i. (Stage dir.)
Coagulate, clotted, II. ii. 495.
Coil, turmoil, III. i. 64.
Collateral, indirect, IV. v. 189.
Collection, inference, IV. v. 9.
Columbine, a plant, IV. v. 163.
Colour, give a pretext for, III. i. 45.
Comment, power of observation, III. ii. 85.
Compare, presume to rival, V. ii. 148.
Competent, sufficient, adequate, I. i. 90.
Comply, be formally courteous, II. ii. 398.
Compost, manure, III. iv. 149.
Compulsive, compelling, I. i. 103.
Compulsive, compelling, III. iv. 86.
Conceit, imagination, II. ii. 594; III. iv. 112.
Concernancy, connection, V. ii. 130.
Concernings, concerns, III. iv. 184.
Conclusions, experiments, III. iv. 188.
Condolement, grief, I. ii. 93.
Confine, abode, I. i. 155.
Congruing, agreeing, IV. iii. 68.
Conjunctive, closely united, IV. vii. 14.
Consequence, as follows, II. i. 43.
Consonancy, harmony, II. ii. 299.
Contagious, pernicious, I. iii. 42.
Continent, receptacle, IV. iv. 63.
Contract, shorten, V. i. 71.
Contraction, marriage contract, III. iv. 46.
Contriving, plotting, IV. vii. 134.
Convey, secrete, III. iii. 29.
Conveyance, conduct, IV. iv. 3.
Cope, to encounter, III. ii. 61.
Coted, passed, II. ii. 336.
Count, account, IV. vii. 17.
Countenance, favor, authority, IV. ii. 18.
Counter, false trail, IV. v. 96.
Counterfeit, imitation, III. iv. 54.
Couplets, young, V. i. 310.
Cozen, to cheat, III. iv. 77.
Cozenage, deceit, V. ii. 67.
Cracked, broken, II. ii. 458.
Crants, garlands, V. i. 255.
Craven, cowardly, IV. iv. 39.
Credent, believing, I. iii. 30.

- Crescent**, growing, I. iii. 11.
Crowner (Coroner), an officer under the crown, V. i. 4.
Cry, company, III. ii. 276.
Cunning, knowledge, II. ii. 472.
Curb, to bow, III. iv. 153.
Curiously, fantastically, V. i. 227.
Currents, courses, III. iii. 58.
- Daintier**, more delicate, V. i. 78.
Dalliance, pleasure, I. iii. 50.
Defeat, destruction, II. ii. 609; V. ii. 58.
Defeated, marred, I. ii. 10.
Definement, description, V. ii. 118.
Delicate, fine, V. ii. 162.
Deliver, report, I. ii. 192.
Delve, dig, III. iv. 201.
Despatch'd, deprived, I. v. 59.
Desperation, despair, III. ii. 216.
Despised, unappreciated, III. i. 69.
Dilated, fully expressed, I. ii. 38.
Dirge, lamentation, I. ii. 12.
Disappointed, unprepared, I. v. 61.
Disasters, ominous appearances, I. i. 118.
Disclose, revelation, III. i. 171.
Disclosed, unfolded, I. iii. 40; hatched, V. i. 310.
Discourse, power of reasoning, IV. iv. 35.
Discovery, disclosure, II. ii. 310.
Disposition, state of mind, I. v. 154.
Distempered, out of sorts, III. ii. 300.
Distil, melt, I. ii. 203.
Distract, mad, IV. v. 2.
Distrust, to have fears for, III. ii. 166.
Document, a lesson or instruction, IV. v. 161.
Dole, grief, I. ii. 13.
Doom, judgment day, III. iv. 50.
Doublet, a garment, II. i. 75.
Doubt, fear, suspect, II. ii. 56; II. ii. 118.
Dout, extinguish, destroy, I. iv. 37.
Down-gyved, in loose rings, II. i. 76.
Draw, to draw to destruction, IV. v. 125.
Dreaded, dreadful, I. i. 25.
Ducat, a coin worth about \$2.30, III. iv. 24.
Dull, to make callous, I. iii. 64.
Dungeon, chief tower of a castle, II. ii. 254.
- Eager**, sharp, I. iv. 2; I. v. 53.
Ecstasy, madness, II. i. 98; III. i. 165; III. iv. 74; III. iv. 137.
Edge, incitement, III. i. 26.
Effect, upshot, substance, I. iii. 45.
Effects, advantages, III. iii. 55.
- Emulate**, envious, I. i. 83.
Enactures, enactments, III. ii. 195.
Encompassment, circumventions, II. i. 10.
Encumbered, folded, I. v. 156.
Engaged, entangled, III. iii. 70.
England, the king of England, IV. iii. 50.
Enginer, digger, III. iv. 199.
Entertainment, welcoming, I. iii. 64; II. ii. 400.
Entreatments, favors, I. iii. 122.
Envious, malignant, IV. vii. 172.
Equivocation, ambiguity, V. i. 152.
Erring, wandering, roving, I. i. 154.
Escoted, payed for, II. ii. 370.
Esil, vinegar, V. i. 299.
Espials, spies, III. i. 32.
Even, straightforward, II. ii. 302; fellow, V. i. 32.
Event, outcome, IV. iv. 40.
Exception, dislike, V. ii. 247.
Excrements, excrescences, III. iv. 119.
Exercise, occupation, III. i. 45.
Expostulate, to discuss at large, II. ii. 86.
Express, exactly fitting, II. ii. 323.
Extant, condescension, II. ii. 398.
Extravagant, wandering, roving, -I. i. 154.
Eyases, unfledged birds, II. ii. 363.
Eye, presence, IV. iv. 6.
- Fain**, gladly, II. ii. 132.
Familiar, friendly, I. iii. 61.
Fantasy, imagination, I. i. 23.
Fardel, a pack, bundle, III. i. 73.
Fares, feed on, how does or how is, III. ii. 98.
Farm, rent, IV. iv. 19.
Fashion, something transient, I. iii. 6.
Fat, out of training, V. ii. 305.
Favour, beauty, appearance, IV. v. 172; V. i. 214.
Fay, faith, II. ii. 275.
Fear-surprised, seized with fear, I. ii. 202.
Feat, a deed, IV. vii. 6.
Feature, shape, III. i. 164.
Fee, value, I. iv. 65.
Felicity, the joys of heaven, V. ii. 365.
Fell, cruel, V. ii. 354.
Fellowship, partnership, III. ii. 276.
Felly, a wheel-rim, II. ii. 528.
Fencing, dueling, II. i. 25.
Fennel, plant, IV. v. 163.
Figure, form, I. i. 41; person, III. iv. 103.
Fine, delicate, II. ii. 478.
Fines, ends, V. i. 116.

- First**, at once, II. ii. 61.
Flaw, gust of wind, V. i. 239.
Flush, lusty, full blown, III. iii. 82.
Flushing, red color, I. ii. 155.
Foll, a blunted rapier, V. ii. 271.
Follows, results, II. ii. 442.
Fond, foolish, I. v. 81; V. ii. 203.
Fool, a clown, III. ii. 50.
Forced, inevitable, V. ii. 401.
Forde, to destroy, V. i. 244.
Forfeit, penalty or fine for misdeed, I. i. 88.
Forgeries, fabricated charges, II. i. 20.
Forgery, imagination, IV. vii. 88.
Frame, order, III. ii. 309.
Frankly, without prejudice, III. i. 34.
Free, innocent, II. ii. 601; III. ii. 240.
 unforced, IV. iii. 65.
Fret, annoy, III. ii. 382.
Fretted, adorned, II. ii. 318.
Friendling, friendliness, I. v. 168.
Frighted, frightened, III. ii. 264.
From, contrary to, III. ii. 23.
Front, forehead, III. iv. 56.
Fruit, dessert, II. ii. 52.
Fruits, consequences, II. ii. 146.
Function, the whole action of the body,
 II. ii. 593.
Fust, to become mouldy, IV. iv. 38.

Gaged, pledged, I. i. 91.
Gain-giving, misgiving, V. ii. 229.
'Gainst, just before, I. i. 158.
Gait, proceeding, I. ii. 31.
Galled, sore, III. ii. 241; I. ii. 255.
Galls, injures, I. iii. 39.
Gambol, skip away, III. iv. 142.
Garb, fashion, manner, II. ii. 398.
Gender, people, IV. vii. 18.
General, common people, II. ii. 468.
Generous, showing gentle breeding, I.
 iii. 74.
Gentry, courtesy, II. ii. 22; V. ii. 116.
Germane, akin, appropriate, V. ii. 167.
Gib, a tomcat, III. iv. 183.
Gibber, gabble, I. i. 116.
Gibes, jeers, V. i. 209.
Gilded, full of gold (for bribes), III.
 iii. 59.
Glimpses, glimmering light, I. iv. 53.
Globe, head, I. v. 79.
Good, good sirs, I. i. 70.
Gore, clotted blood, II. ii. 495.
Gorge, the throat, V. i. 207.
Grace, honor, favor, I. i. 131; I. iii. 53;
 I. iv. 33; IV. v. 115.
Gracious, blessed, I. i. 164; III. i. 43.

Grained, stained permanently, III. iv.
 90.
Grating, offending, vexing, III. i. 3.
Graveness, dignity, IV. vii. 80.
Green, inexperienced, I. iii. 101.
Greenly, foolishly, IV. v. 69.
Grizzled, gray, I. ii. 239.
Gross, large, obvious, IV. iv. 45.
Groundlings, rabble, III. ii. 12.
Gruet, groan, III. i. 74.
Gules, red, bloody, II. ii. 490.
Gulf, whirlpool, III. iii. 16.
Gyves, fetters, IV. vii. 21.

Habit, politeness, V. ii. 201.
Handsome, natural beauty, II. ii. 478.
Hanger, strap for attaching the sword
 to the girdle, V. ii. 159.
Hap, happen, I. ii. 248.
Haply, perchance, perhaps, III. i. 176.
Hapilly, haply, I. i. 134.
Happiness, felicity in expression, II. ii.
 217.
Happy, in good time, V. ii. 216.
Haps, fortune, IV. iii. 72.
Harbinger, a forerunner, I. i. 122.
Hatchment, escutcheon, IV. v. 197.
Haunt, society, IV. i. 18.
Have, understand, II. i. 64.
Haviour, deportment, I. ii. 81.
Havoc, destruction, V. ii. 382.
Head, armed force, IV. v. 87.
Hearsed, coffined, entombed I. iv. 47.
Heat, anger, III. iv. 4.
Heavy, it goes hard, III. iii. 85.
Hebenon, probably the hemlock or hen-
 bane, I. v. 46.
Hectic, fever, IV. iii. 70.
Hedge, encompass, IV. v. 106.
Hent, opportunity, III. iii. 89.
Heraldry, regular formalities of her-
 alds, I. i. 87.
Hey-day, passion, wildness, III. iv. 69.
Hies, hastens, I. i. 154.
Hillo, a falconer's cry to recall his
 hawk, I. v. 97.
Home, thoroughly, III. iii. 30.
Honest, virtuous, II. ii. 476; III. i. 100.
Honesty, proper, right, II. ii. 207.
Hoops, bands, I. iii. 63.
Humorous, eccentric, II. ii. 342.
Husband, manage, IV. v. 121.
Husbandry, economy, I. iii. 77.

I, ay, III. ii. 278.
Idle, crazy, III. ii. 96.
'Ield, yield, IV. v. 40.

- Ilium**, the palace in Troy, II. ii. 506.
Ill-breeding, mischief-breeding, IV. v. 15.
Illumine, I. i. 37.
Image, reproduction, III. ii. 236.
Immediate, near, I. ii. 109.
Impart, express myself, I. ii. 112.
Impasted, covered with a paste, II. ii. 492.
Imperious, imperial, V. i. 236.
Implorators, implorers, I. iii. 129.
Imponed, staked, V. ii. 158.
Important, urgent, III. iv. 107.
Importing, concerning, I. ii. 23; V. ii. 21.
Imposthume, abscess, IV. iv. 26.
Impress, enforced service, I. i. 75.
Imputation, reputation, V. ii. 151.
In, into, III. ii. 87.
Incapable, insensible to, IV. vii. 177.
Incorporal, immaterial, III. iv. 116.
Incorporsed, incorporate, IV. vii. 86.
Incorrect, not subdued, I. ii. 95.
Index, preface, III. iv. 52.
Indict, accuse, convict, II. ii. 475.
Indifferent, average, II. ii. 235; fairly, III. i. 121.
Indifferently, pretty well, III. ii. 42.
Indirections, indirect means, II. i. 62.
Indued, suited, endowed, IV. vii. 178.
Inexplicable, senseless, III. ii. 14.
Infusion, qualities, V. ii. 124.
Ingenious, intelligent, V. i. 271.
Inheritance, possession, I. i. 92.
Inhibition, prohibition, II. ii. 353.
Innovation, change, II. ii. 354.
Insinuation, artful intrusion, V. ii. 59.
Instance, example, IV. v. 145.
Instances, motives, III. ii. 183.
Instant, instantly, I. v. 76.
Intents, purposes, I. iv. 42.
Interpret, explain, III. ii. 244.
Intill, into, V. i. 81.
Inurn'd, entombed, I. iv. 49.
Investments, vestures, I. iii. 128.
Is, belongs, II. ii. 124.
Jealousy, suspicion, II. i. 109.
Jig, a ludicrous ballad, to walk as if dancing a jig, II. ii. 533; III. i. 148.
Jointress, dowager, I. ii. 9.
Jowls, knocks, V. i. 84.
Jump, just, I. i. 65.
Just, balanced, III. ii. 60.
Keep, dwell, II. i. 8.
Kettle, kettle-drum, V. ii. 292.
Kibe, sore on the heel, V. i. 157.
Kind, 1, natural; 2, affectionate, I. ii. 65.
Kindless, unnatural, II. ii. 620.
Knotted, interwoven, I. v. 18.
Know, acknowledge, V. ii. 149.
Laboursome, laborious, I. ii. 59.
Lack, to be wanting, I. v. 169.
Lapsed, to let time pass, III. iv. 106.
Lapwing, symbol of a forward fellow, V. ii. 196.
Larded, garnished, dressed, IV. v. 36; interspersed, V. ii. 20.
Lawless, landless, I. i. 98.
Leave, cease, III. ii. 175; III. iv. 34.
Lends, gives, I. iii. 117.
Lenten, meager, II. ii. 335.
Lethe, river of oblivion, I. v. 33.
Lets, hinders, I. iv. 86.
Level, direct, IV. i. 42; IV. v. 134.
Liberal, free-spoken, IV. vii. 169; V. ii. 162.
Liberty, license, II. ii. 431.
Lief, gladly, III. ii. 4.
Lightness, light-headedness, II. ii. 150.
Like, likely, I. ii. 235.
Likes, pleases, II. ii. 80.
Limed, caught, as with bird lime, III. iii. 69.
List, muster-role, I. i. 98; boundary, IV. v. 85; listen to, I. iii. 30.
Living, lasting, V. i. 320.
Loam, clay, V. i. 233.
Loggats, a game, V. i. 101.
Lose, to waste, to throw away, I. ii. 45.
Machine, body, II. ii. 124.
Maimed, imperfect, V. i. 242.
Main, country as a whole, IV. iv. 14.
Mainly, powerfully, IV. vii. 9.
Make, bring, I. ii. 163; II. ii. 281.
Manner, fashion, custom, I. iv. 15.
Margent, margin, V. ii. 165.
Mart, marketing, traffic, I. i. 74.
Matin, morning, I. v. 71.
Matter, sense, II. ii. 200; II. ii. 514; IV. v. 157.
Mazard, skull, V. i. 98.
Need, merit, V. ii. 151.
Meet, proper, I. v. 89.
Mcere, pure, V. i. 307.
Merely, entirely, I. ii. 137.
Metal, courage, I. i. 96.
Milch, tearful, moist, II. ii. 549.
Milky, white, II. ii. 511.
Mincing, cutting in pieces, II. ii. 547.
Mineral, mine, IV. i. 26.
Mobled, muffled, II. ii. 535.
Model, duplicate, V. ii. 50.

- Modesty**, moderation, II. ii. 472; III. ii. 22; V. i. 230; II. ii. 293.
Mole, blemish, I. iv. 24.
Mope, to be stupid, III. iv. 81.
Moreover, besides, II. ii. 2.
Mortal, deadly, IV. vii. 141.
Mote, atom, I. i. 112.
Motion, impulse, III. iv. 72; attack, IV. vii. 156.
Mountebank, quack, IV. vii. 140.
Move, cause, II. i. 114.
Mows, grimaces, II. ii. 390.
Muddled, stirred up, IV. v. 67.
Mutes, dumb spectators, V. ii. 353.
Mutine, rebel, III. iv. 83.
- Napkin**, handkerchief, V. ii. 306.
Native, kindred, relative, I. ii. 47.
Nature, natural affection, I. v. 65.
Necessary, inevitable, III. ii. 190.
Neighbor, intimate, II. ii. 12.
Nerve, sinew, muscle, I. iv. 84.
Neutral, indifferent, II. ii. 514.
Nick-name, misname, III. i. 149.
Niggard, miserly, stingy, III. i. 13.
Nomination, naming, V. ii. 135.
Nonce, occasion, IV. vii. 159.
Nose, smell, IV. iii. 39.
Note, attention, III. ii. 90.
Noyance, injury, harm, III. iii. 13.
- Obsequious**, dutiful, I. ii. 92.
Occulted, hidden, III. ii. 86.
Occurrences, events, V. ii. 375.
Odds, the greater stake, V. ii. 278, 280.
O'er-raught, overtook, III. i. 17.
O'er-reaches, outwits, V. i. 87.
O'ertook, intoxicated, II. i. 56.
Of, resulting from, IV. iv. 40; by, I. i. 25; IV. iii. 4; on, IV. v. 183; about, concerning, IV. v. 45; upon, II. ii. 307; over, II. ii. 27.
Omen, portent, I. i. 123.
Ominous, fatal, II. ii. 487.
On, in, V. i. 211.
Once, ever, I. v. 102.
Open'd, disclosed, II. ii. 18.
Operant, active, III. ii. 175.
Opposites, opponents, V. ii. 62.
Orb, earth, II. ii. 518.
Orchard, garden, I. v. 35.
Order, prescribed rule, V. i. 251.
Ordinant, ordaining, V. ii. 48.
Ordinance, cannon, V. ii. 287.
Ore, gold, IV. i. 25.
Organ, instrument, IV. vii. 69.
Orisons, prayers, III. i. 86.
- Ostentation**, funeral pomp, IV. v. 198.
Outstretched, glorified, II. ii. 273.
Overlooked, perused, IV. vi. 13.
Overpeering, rising above, IV. v. 85.
- Paddock**, toad, III. iv. 183.
Pales, fence, I. iv. 28.
Pall, become ineffective, V. ii. 9.
Paragon, model of perfection, II. ii. 326.
Pardon, permission, I. ii. 56; III. ii. 319. IV. vii. 45.
Parle, conference, I. i. 62.
Part, quality, gift, IV. vii. 75.
Particular, individual, I. iv. 23.
Partisan, halberd, battle-axe, I. i. 140.
Parts, qualities, IV. vii. 72.
Party, companion, II. i. 40.
Pass, thrust, V. ii. 61; passage, II. ii. 77.
Passage, bearing off the body, V. ii. 418.
Passing, surpassingly, II. ii. 437.
Passion, deep sorrow, II. ii. 551; IV. v. 171.
Pate, head, V. i. 117.
Patience, permission, III. ii. 114.
Pause, time for reflection, III. i. 65.
Peak, sneak, II. ii. 605.
Peasant, rustic, II. ii. 587.
Peculiar, private, III. iii. 11.
Perdition, loss, V. ii. 118.
Perpend, consider, II. ii. 105.
Perusal, examination, II. i. 86.
Pester, trouble, annoy, I. ii. 22.
Petard, kind of a bomb, III. iv. 200.
Picked, precise, refined, V. i. 155.
Pith, height, importance, III. i. 83.
Piteous, exciting compassion, II. i. 90.
Plausible, pleasing, I. iv. 30.
Plurisy, redundancy of blood, excess, IV. vii. 116.
Ply, practise, II. i. 68.
Politician, plotter, schemer, V. i. 86.
Poniard, dagger, V. ii. 159.
Posset, curdle, I. v. 52.
Posy, short poem, III. ii. 152.
Powers, troops, IV. iv. 9.
Practice, artifice, plot, IV. vii. 66; V. ii. 336.
Practices, devices, II. ii. 38.
Precedent, former, III. iv. 97.
Precurse, forewarning, I. i. 121.
Pregnant, yielding, ready, III. ii. 67.
Prenominate, aforesaid, II. i. 41.
Presently, immediately, II. ii. 172, 631; III. ii. 54; V. ii. 411.
Pressure, imprint, III. ii. 28.
Prevent, anticipate, II. ii. 310.
Primy, springlike, I. iii. 7.
Probation, proof, I. i. 156.

- Process**, history, I. v. 37; what goes on, III. iii. 30; mandate, IV. iii. 67.
Profit, advantage, II. ii. 24.
Progress, royal journey, IV. iii. 33.
Pronounce, speak on, III. ii. 311.
Proof, trial, II. ii. 523.
Proper, appropriate, II. i. 110; own, very, V. ii. 66.
Property, kingly right, II. ii. 608.
Proposer, orator, II. ii. 301.
Puff'd, bloated, I. iii. 49.
Purging, discharging, II. ii. 203.
Pursy, short-winded, III. iv. 151.
Quaintly, skilfully, II. i. 29.
Qualifies, moderates, IV. vii. 112.
Quality, profession, II. ii. 371, 462; IV. vii. 71.
Quantity, portion, III. iv. 75.
Quarry, heap of dead, V. ii. 382.
Question, occasion, I. i. 111; II. ii. 364; III. i. 13; talk, III. iv. 12; controversy, V. ii. 393.
Quick, living, V. i. 142.
Quiddits, subtleties, V. i. 108.
Quietus, settlement, III. i. 72.
Quillet, sly trick in argument, V. i. 109.
Quintessence, pure essence, II. ii. 327.
Quit, requite, V. ii. 68.
Quoted, noted, observed, II. i. 108.
Rack, cloud, II. ii. 517.
Range, roam at large, III. iii. 2.
Ranker, richer, greater, IV. iv. 21.
Rankly, grossly, I. v. 38.
Rapier, short sword, V. ii. 158.
Rashly, hastily, V. ii. 6.
Ravel, disclose, III. iv. 179.
Razed, slashed, III. ii. 275.
Reach, capacity, II. i. 60.
Reck, care for, I. iii. 51.
Recorder, flute, III. ii. 290.
Rede, advice, I. iii. 51.
Redeliver, report, V. ii. 189.
Reels, dances wildly, I. iv. 9.
Regards, conditions, II. ii. 79.
Region, air, II. ii. 520.
Relative, conclusive, II. ii. 644.
Relish, have a flavor, III. i. 118.
Remembrances, mementoes, III. i. 90.
Remiss, careless, IV. vii. 133.
Remorse, pity, II. ii. 524.
Removed, secluded, I. iv. 62.
Repast, feed, IV. v. 130.
Replication, answer, IV. ii. 13.
Requiem, the mass for the dead, V. i. 260.
Requite, repay, I. ii. 250.
Resolutes, desperadoes, I. i. 98.
Resolve, melt, I. ii. 130.
Re-speaking, re-echoing, I. ii. 128.
Respect, motive, III. i. 65.
Rest, stay, abode, II. ii. 13.
Rests, remains, III. iii. 65.
Retrograde, contrary, I. ii. 114.
Reverend, venerable, II. ii. 512.
Revolution, change, V. i. 99.
Riband, ornament, IV. vii. 76.
Rites, funeral service, V. i. 242.
Rivals, partners, I. i. 13.
Robustious, sturdy, III. ii. 10.
Romage, bustle, turmoil, I. i. 107.
Rood, cross, III. iv. 14.
Rots, grows, I. v. 33.
Rose, charm, grace, III. iv. 42.
Rosemary, herb, IV. v. 158.
Round, straight, II. ii. 140; direct, III. i. 188; overspoken, III. iv. 5.
Rouse, drinking bout, I. ii. 127.
Row, stanza, II. ii. 448.
Rub, impediment, III. i. 62.
Rue, pity, IV. v. 164.
Russett, reddish brown, I. i. 166.
Sables, rich furs, III. ii. 132; IV. vii. 79.
Sallets, relish, II. ii. 474.
Salvation, damnation, V. i. 2.
Sanctuarize, protect, IV. vii. 126.
Sans, without, III. iv. 79.
Saws, maxims, I. v. 82.
Scan, carefully consider, III. iii. 76.
Scarfed, put on loosely, V. ii. 13.
Scholar, man of learning, I. i. 42.
Sconce, head, V. i. 111.
Scope, aim, III. ii. 217.
Scourge, punishment, IV. iii. 6.
Scrimers, fencers, IV. vii. 99.
Scullion, kitchen servant, II. ii. 627.
Season, restrain, modify, I. ii. 191; liken, I. iii. 81; qualify, II. i. 28.
Secure, careless, I. v. 45.
Seeming, appearance, III. ii. 93.
Semblable, likeness, V. ii. 125.
Sense, feeling, sensibility, III. iv. 38, 72, 159.
Sensibly, feeling, IV. v. 133.
Sequent, following, V. ii. 54.
Sergeant, sheriff's officer, V. ii. 354.
Set, regard, esteem, I. iv. 66.
Several, separate, V. ii. 20.
Shape, act our part, IV. vii. 149.
Shards, fragments, V. i. 254.
Shark'd, collected, I. i. 98.
Sheen, brightness, luster, III. ii. 158.
Sheeted, enveloped in shrouds, I. i. 115.
Shent, put to shame, III. ii. 411.

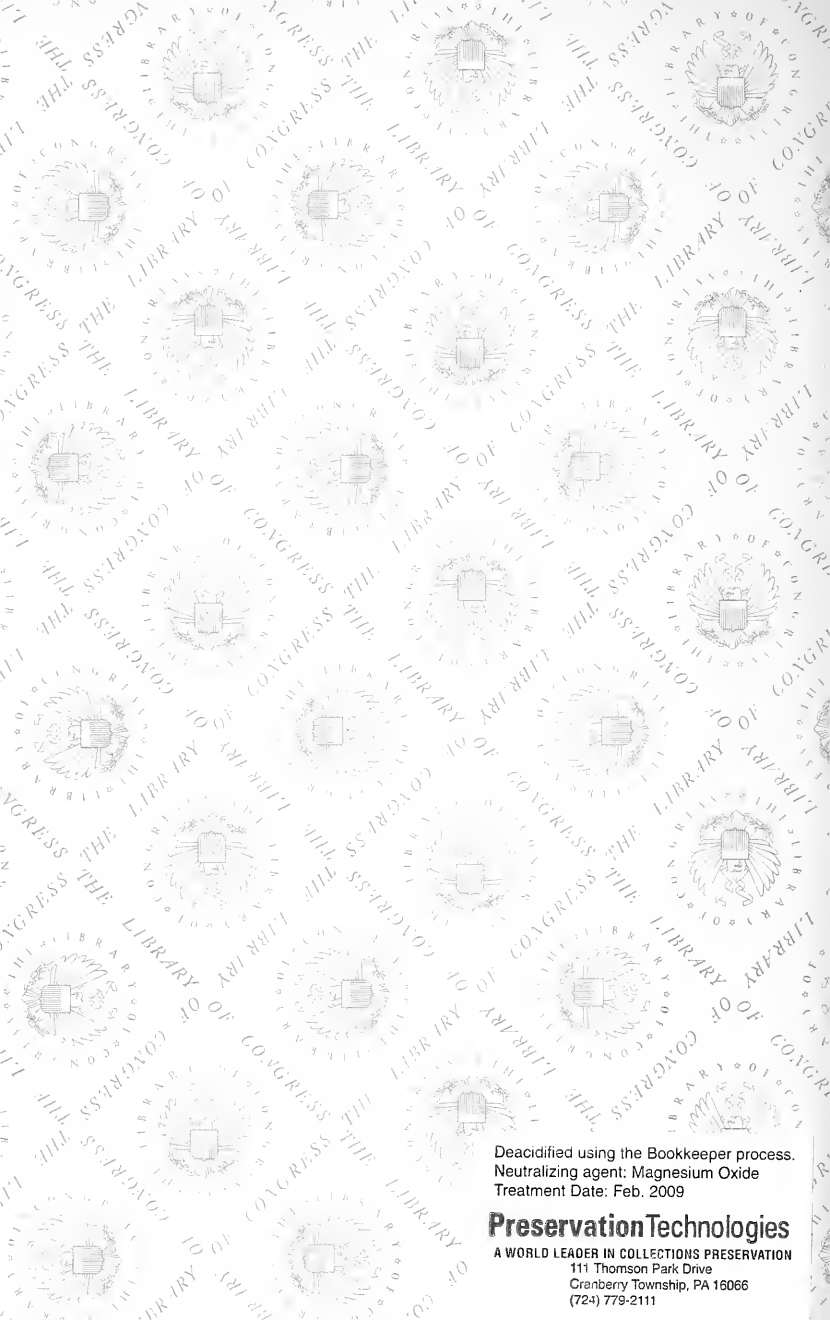
- Short**, controlled, IV. i. 18.
Showing, fine appearance, V. ii. 114.
Shrewdly, keenly, I. iv. 1.
Siege, rank, IV. vii. 75.
Simple, silly, weak, I. ii. 97.
Simples, herbs, IV. vii. 143.
Skirts, borders, I. i. 97.
Slander, abuse, I. iii. 133.
Slips, faults, offences, II. i. 22.
Sliver, splinter, twig, IV. vii. 172.
Smote, defeated, I. i. 63.
So, such, III. i. 66; provided that, IV. vii. 59.
Softly, slowly, IV. iv. 8.
Soil, defile, I. iv. 20.
Sole, only, III. iii. 78.
Solicited, urged, moved, V. ii. 376.
Sometimes, formerly, I. i. 49.
Sort, associate, II. ii. 277; turn out, accord, I. i. 109.
Sovereignty, command, I. iv. 74.
Spills, destroys, IV. v. 20.
Splenitive, passionate, V. i. 284.
Springes, snares, I. iii. 115.
Spurns, kicks, IV. v. 6.
Stalk, stride, I. i. 50.
State, condition, I. i. 101.
Station, attitude, III. iv. 58.
Statists, statesmen, V. ii. 33.
Stay, wait for, V. ii. 24.
Sterling, genuine, I. iii. 107.
Stiffly, strongly, I. v. 77.
Still, always, I. i. 122; I. ii. 104; II. ii. 42; IV. vii. 115.
Stithy, smithy, III. ii. 90.
Stomach, courage, I. i. 100.
Stoop, drinking cup, V. i. 68.
Straws, trifles, IV. v. 6.
Strike, blast, I. i. 162.
Stuck, thrust, IV. vii. 160.
Subject, people, I. i. 72.
Succession, future, II. ii. 376.
Suddenly, immediately, II. ii. 219.
Sullies, stains, II. i. 37.
Supervise, perusal, V. ii. 23.
Supplance, amusement, I. iii. 9.
Supply, aiding, II. ii. 24.
Supposal, opinion, I. ii. 18.
Synod, meeting, II. ii. 527.

Table, tablet, I. v. 80.
Taints, stains, blemishes, I. v. 67; II. i. 30.
Take, assume, II. i. 13.
Takes, affects, enchants, I. i. 163; endures, III. i. 71.
Target, small shield, II. ii. 341.
Tarre, urge on, incite, II. ii. 379.

Tax'd, censured, I. iv. 18.
Tell, count, number, I. ii. 237.
Temperance, restraint, III. ii. 8.
Temper'd, compounded, V. ii. 347.
Temple, body, I. iii. 12.
Tend, wait, I. iii. 83; IV. iii. 49.
Tender, exhibit, I. iii. 107, 109; regard, IV. iii. 45.
Tenders, promises, I. iii. 106.
Tent, probe, II. ii. 637.
Terms, conditions, IV. vii. 26.
Tetter, scab, I. v. 55.
Thereon, on that account, II. ii. 166.
Thews, sinews, I. iii. 12.
Thought, care, anxiety, IV. v. 171.
Thrift, profit, III. ii. 68.
Tinct, dye, colour, III. iv. 91.
To, compared to, I. ii. 140.
Topp'd, surpassed, IV. vii. 87.
Touch'd, implicated, IV. v. 190.
Toward, forthcoming, I. i. 77; in preparation, V. ii. 383.
Toy, trifle, IV. v. 18.
Toys, fancies, I. iv. 76.
Trace, follow, V. ii. 127.
Trade, business, III. ii. 338.
Translate, change, III. i. 111.
Travel, stroll, II. ii. 350.
Trick, habit, IV. vii. 186; skill, V. i. 99.
Trick'd, adorned, II. ii. 490.
Tristful, sorrowful, III. iv. 50.
Tropically, figuratively, III. ii. 235.
Truant, roving, I. ii. 168; idler, I. ii. 172.
Truncheon, a staff of office, I. ii. 203.
Truster, believer, I. ii. 171.
Tyrannically, vehemently, II. ii. 364.
Tyrannous, cruel, II. ii. 493.

Umbrage, shadow, V. ii. 126.
Unaneled, without extreme unction, I. v. 61.
Unbated, unblunted, IV. vii. 137; V. ii. 336.
Unbraced, unfastened, II. i. 74.
Uncharge, acquit, IV. vii. 66.
Undergo, bear, I. iv. 34.
Unfold, disclose, I. i. 2.
Ungalled, unhurt, III. ii. 270.
Ungored, unwounded, V. ii. 266.
Ungracious, graceless, I. iii. 47.
Unhoused, without sacrament, I. v. 61.
Unimproved, unemployed, I. i. 96.
Union, large pearl, V. ii. 289.
Unkennel, discover, disclose, III. ii. 87.
Unmaster'd, unbridled, I. iii. 32.
Unpregnant, indifferent, II. ii. 606.
Unprevailing, useless, I. ii. 107.
Unproportion'd, unsuitable, I. iii. 60.

- Unreclaimèd**, untamed, wild, II. i. 32.
Unrighteous, insincere, I. ii. 154.
Unshaped, confused, IV. v. 8.
Unsifted, untried, I. iii. 102.
Unsinew'd, weak, IV. vii. 10.
Unsure, insecure, IV. iv. 50.
Unvalued, low born, mean, I. iii. 19.
Unwring, sound, III. ii. 241.
Unyoke, quit work, V. i. 59.
Upshot, conclusion, V. ii. 402.
Up-spring, dance, I. iv. 9.
Uses, habits, customs, I. ii. 134.
Usurp, exercise unlawfully, III. ii. 257.
Vailed, lowered, I. ii. 70.
Valanced, bearded, II. ii. 452.
Validity, value, worth, III. ii. 187.
Variable, various, IV. iii. 25.
Vast, void, I. ii. 197.
Ventages, air holes, III. ii. 366.
Vice, buffoon, clown, III. iv. 97.
Virtue, rapid power, III. iv. 150; IV. v. 138.
Visitation, visit, II. ii. 25.
Voice, vote, opinion, V. ii. 265, 374.
Vulgar, common, I. ii. 99; I. iii. 61.
Wag, move, III. iv. 39.
Wake, feast late, I. iv. 8.
Wann'd, turned pale, II. ii. 591.
Wanton, effeminate, weakling, V. ii. 317.
Wantonness, affection, III. i. 150.
Wash, sea, III. ii. 157.
Wassail, revelry, carousal, I. iv. 9.
Watch, wakefulness, II. ii. 149.
Waves, beckons, I. iv. 69.
Weeds, garments, IV. vii. 79.
Wharf, bank of a river, I. v. 33.
Wheel, refrain of a song, IV. v. 154.
Wholesome, reasonable, sensible, III. ii. 318.
Wildness, madness, III. i. 40.
Will, appetite, III. iv. 88.
Windlasses, roundabout ways, II. i. 61.
Winnowed, exquisite, select, V. ii. 203.
Wit, wisdom, knowledge, II. ii. 90.
With, by, IV. vii. 32.
Withal, with, I. iii. 28; II. ii. 301.
Withers, the part between the shoulder blades of a horse, III. ii. 241.
Wont, used, accustomed, I. iv. 6.
Woodcocks, birds supposed to be brainless, I. iii. 115.
Word, watchword, I. v. 92.
Would, wish, I. ii. 235.
Woundless, invulnerable, IV. i. 44.
Wreck, ruin, II. i. 109.
Writ, writing, II. ii. 431.
Yaw, stagger, move unsteadily, V. ii. 121.
Yawn, gape, III. ii. 402.
Yeomen, dweller in a village, V. ii. 36.
Yesty, frothy, V. ii. 201.
Yield, furnish, IV. v. 11.
Yielding, consent, I. iii. 23.
Yourself, personally, II. i. 67.

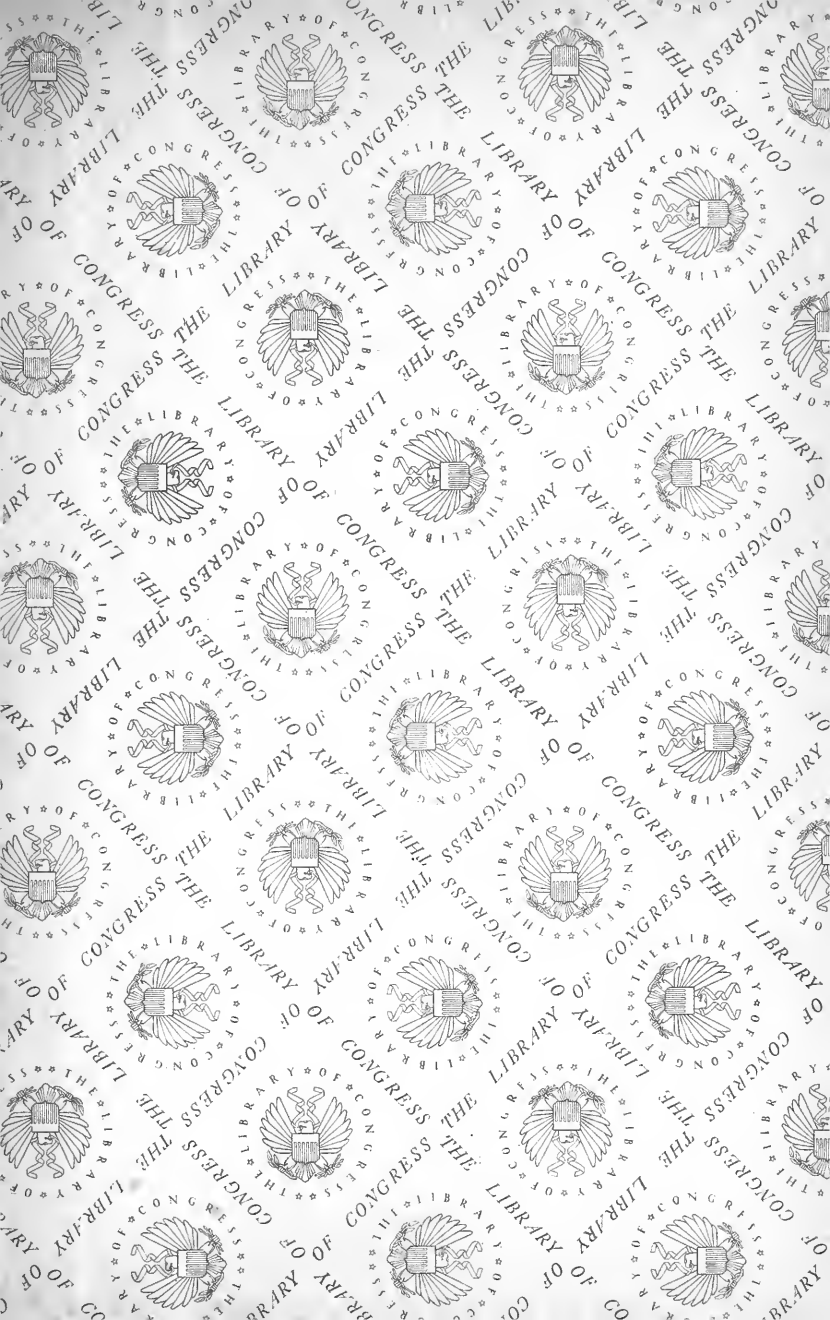


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